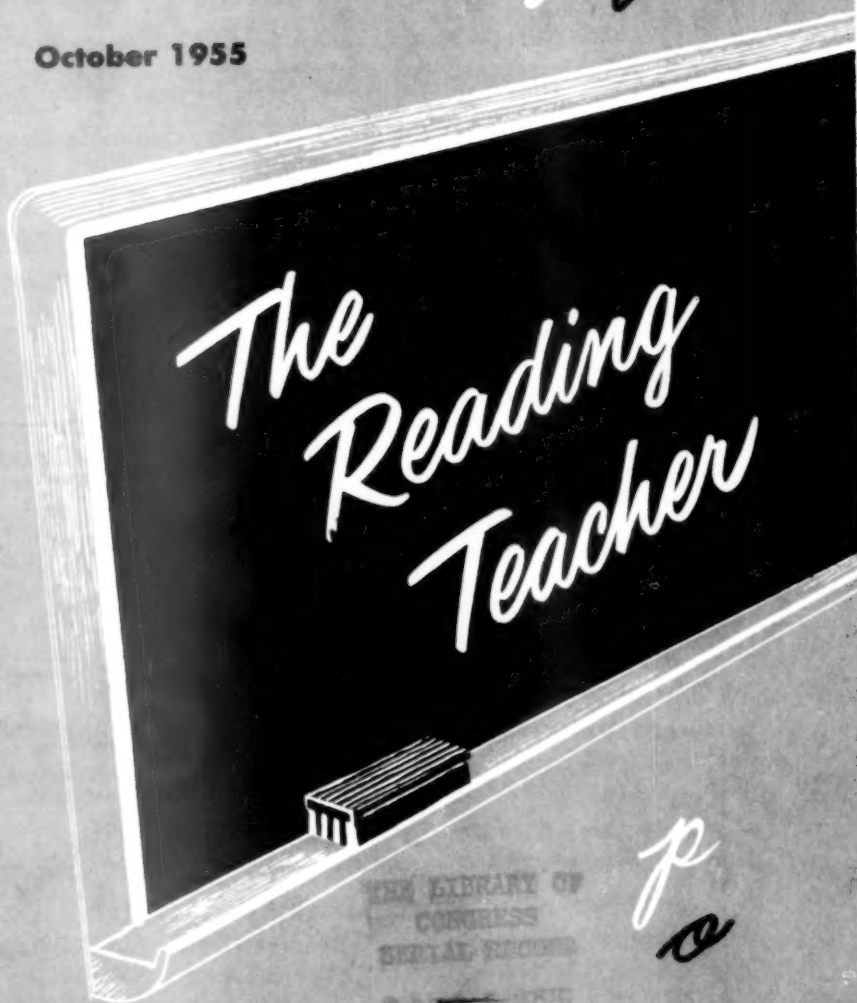


OCT 12 1955

a b c d e f g

October 1955

1
2
3
4
5
6



Reading and the Emotions

h i j k l m n

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: DR. WILLIAM S. GRAY, The Department of Education, The University of Chicago, Chicago 37, Illinois.

President-Elect: DR. NANCY LARRICK, 230 East 48th Street, New York 17, New York.

Past President: MARGARET A. ROBINSON, Principal, Pauline Avenue School, Toronto, Canada.

Executive Secretary-Treasurer: DR. DONALD L. CLELAND, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania.

Directors: DR. WALTER B. BARBE, University of Chattanooga, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

DR. EMMETT A. BETTS, Director, Betts Reading Clinic, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

DR. DAVID H. RUSSELL, University of California, Berkeley.

DR. WILLIAM D. SHELDON, University of Syracuse, Syracuse, New York.

DR. RUTH STRANG, Teachers College, Columbia University.

DR. LAVERNE STRONG, Department of Education, Hartford, Connecticut.

COMMITTEES

(Person first named is chairman.)

Program Committee: DR. NANCY LARRICK, DR. NILA BANTON SMITH, DR. ALBERT J. HARRIS.

Publications Committee: DR. J. ALLEN FIGUREL, DR. PAUL WITTY, DR. GERALD A. YOAKAM.

Organization Committee: DR. WILLIAM D. SHELDON, DR. C. B. ROUTLEY, DR. RALPH STAIGER, DR. WENDEL C. LANTON.

MEMBERSHIP

Annual Dues: \$2.50.

Life Membership: \$50. Make checks payable to DONALD L. CLELAND, Executive Secretary-Treasurer. Send checks to DR. CLELAND, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania.

EDITOR OF THE READING TEACHER

DR. J. ALLEN FIGUREL, The Sunwood, Buckboard Trail, Allison Park 2, Pa.
(Pittsburgh Public Schools, University of Pittsburgh)

ADVERTISING MANAGER

H. ALAN ROBINSON, Memorial High School, Valley Stream, New York.

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

A. STERL ARTLEY, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.

ALVINA TREUT BURROWS, School of Education, New York University.

ROMA GANS, Teachers College, Columbia University.

GERTRUDE HILDRETH, Brooklyn College, New York.

LELAND B. JACOBS, Teachers College, Columbia University.

DAISY JONES, Elementary Supervisor, Richmond, Indiana.

MARY MCCREA, Reading Specialist, Manhasset, New York.

MURIEL POTTER LANGMAN, Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

H. ALAN ROBINSON, Reading Coordinator, Memorial High School, Valley Stream, New York.

DAVID H. RUSSELL, University of California, Berkeley.

NILA B. SMITH, Director, Reading Institute, New York University.

RALPH STAIGER, Reading Director, Mississippi Southern College, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

JOSEPHINE TRONSBURG, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh.

EDITOR

J. ALLEN FIGUREL

BUSINESS MANAGER

DONALD L. CLELAND

ADVERTISING MANAGER

H. ALAN ROBINSON

Contents

	Page
READING AND THE EMOTIONS: OVERVIEW—David H. Russell.....	3
CREATIVE READING INCLUDES EMOTIONAL FACTORS—Robert N. Nardelli.....	5
EMOTIONAL FACTORS AND READING DISABILITIES—Jack A. Holmes.....	11
THERAPY AS A PART OF REMEDIATION—Nila Banton Smith	18
BIBLIOTHERAPY—Caroline Shrodes.....	24
EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO A SHORT STORY—John R. Squire.....	30
THE RELATION OF READING TO DEVELOPMENT IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS—Ruth Strickland.....	35
WHAT RESEARCH SAYS TO THE TEACHER OF READING— <i>Personality and Reading</i> —Ruth H. Solomon	41
WHAT OTHER MAGAZINES ARE SAYING ABOUT THE TEACHING OF READING—Muriel Potter Langman	45
INTERESTING BOOKS FOR THE READING TEACHER—Bertha B. Friedman	51
AND STILL WE GROW!—Margaret A. Robinson..	55
THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—William S. Gray...	59
NEWS OF LOCAL COUNCILS—Josephine Tronsberg	63

THE READING TEACHER is published four times a year, October, December, February, and April, by the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction (I.C.I.R.I.). Headquarters: The Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Fifth Avenue and Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania. Mailed to all members of the I.C.I.R.I. in good standing according to its constitution and by-laws. Available to non-members at a subscription of \$2.50 per year. Single copies, \$1.00; 5-9 copies, 75c each; 10-19 copies, 60c each; 20-49 copies, 50c each; 50 or more copies, 45c each. Copyright, 1955 by the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction, Inc. Second class mail privileges authorized at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Guest Editor, Dr. David H. Russell, is one of the best qualified persons in the country to organize and plan a series of articles on reading and the emotions. Both his educational and professional backgrounds have contributed richly to his understanding of this very important area of teaching children to read. He has had a wealth of experience in both elementary and secondary schools. For a number of years now he has been on the staffs of schools of education at several universities. At present he is professor of education at the University of California. He is on the board of ICIRI, and, among many offices, he has held the presidency of the National Conference on Research in English.

Dr. Russell has written a number of books and many magazine articles for teachers. He is the author of the section dealing with child development in the 48TH YEARBOOK of the National Society for the Study of Education. He is the author of CHILDREN LEARN TO READ, a very practical book on the teaching of reading. He is the chief author of a series of basal readers. He has served as adviser and consultant to many school administrators. These are just a few of his accomplishments. We are fortunate to have him as guest editor. May we express our gratitude and thanks to him and his writers for these excellent articles.

Of general interest to our readers is an enlightening article by Dr. Strickland on reading and the language arts. Our research column is continued, with Ruth H. Solomon, University of Chicago, as researcher and writer. Dr. Muriel Potter Langman continues to bring us succinct statements concerning articles on reading appearing in other magazines. For those interested in professional books, Dr. Friedman has had two reviewed for us.

The outlook for this year's articles is very promising. Dr. Betts has planned some fine articles on word perception skills for the December issue. This issue ought to do much to clarify some of the issues that have been confused by certain writers this year. Our delightful Dr. Jacobs will bring us some very worthwhile ideas on reading and literature in February, and Dr. Witty will round out the year with an issue on reading programs for gifted children.

Don't you agree with me that we have some good things coming? Pass the word along to your teacher friends. Better still have them become members of ICIRI and receive THE READING TEACHER.

J. ALLEN FIGUREL, Editor

1 543
And Now . . .

To Introduce the Feature Theme

121

Reading and the Emotions: Overview

A RECENT BOOK advocating one kind of teaching for all kinds of children pooh-poohs the idea that emotions affect the child's reading. It shows a flagrant disregard for the evidence that emotional behavior is closely interwoven with other factors in reading ability as cause, concomitant or result. For example, with rather heavy-handed sarcasm the book states, "To them (educators) failure in reading is never caused by poor teaching. Lord no, perish the thought. Reading failure is due to poor eyesight . . . or a broken home, or undernourishment, or a wicked stepmother, or an oedipus complex, or sibling rivalry, or God knows what." Absurd? Each one by itself, perhaps. But broken homes, parental pressures, sibling comparisons and other factors, along with teaching and materials, may be causes of poor reading. And equally favorable emotional factors may be associated with high-level reading. Emotional factors are closely interwoven into positive and negative aspects of reading.

This issue of THE READING TEACHER was planned before the book containing the above statement was published. It is not intended as a rebuttal to the book's unfounded generalizations but as a practical yet comprehensive view of some of the roles emotion may play in the reading process. It collects some of the evidence of previous researches about the interrelationships of emotion and reading and also presents, in at least three articles, some new evidence on the topic. This evidence is not stated in the complete detail found in most doctoral dissertations but it is based none-the-less on careful study and is presented here in a form which should prove useful to many teachers, supervisors and other curriculum and clinic workers.

Psychologists have long realized that emotional factors are often closely related to the learning process. They seem to affect not only what the child or adolescent learns but how he learns, whether it is reading achievement or some more specific skill. Many texts in educational psychology discuss not only theories of emotion but their effects on learning. General discussions of the topic are those by Anderson (1) and by Jones, Conrad and Murphy (3). A number of other general studies on the causes of under-achievement or over-achievement in school work, as related to normal expectation, include records of emotional factors.

More specifically, the research on reading and the emotions has been collected and organized in a number of articles. For example, Gates' (2) 1941 summary of cases studied was one of the first reviews of the role of emotions in a variety of reading disability cases. Russell's (4) 1947 review of reading and mental health factors included thirty-four references. More recently Witty (7) has summarized the evidence in his article "Reading Success and Emotional Adjustment." Russell's (5) summary of 170 references on interrelationships of the language arts and personality contains many items dealing with reading.

Smith's (6) recent statement reviews some of the research on reading and the emotions and includes seven studies in which therapy has been used successfully as a part of the remedial work with retarded readers.

The articles in this issue of *THE READING TEACHER* indicate some of the breadth and the depth of a topic like "Reading and the Emotions." They include accounts of teachers' reactions to the meaning of the reading process, of psychological concomitants of reading difficulties, of emotional responses to literature, and of the use of reading as one therapeutic measure. They note that there are negative aspects of the problem in the clear association of reading difficulties and personality difficulties but they also reveal two main positive emphases in the areas of responses to literature and the use of literary materials to improve adjustment to oneself and to others. Nardelli reviews the concept of the creative reading process and shows how emotional factors enter into it. Holmes gives a penetrating psychological analysis of probable roles of emotion, along with other factors, in reading disability cases. Smith's article provides an excellent bridge between what might be called the negative and positive aspects of the problem because it starts with the difficulties of retarded readers and goes on to show how various types of therapy are now being used along with other phases of remedial instruction. Shrodes gives a succinct exposition of one of these varieties of therapy and shows how bibliotherapy has been effective in the adjustments of some college students. Squire concludes the group of articles with an experimental study of emotional reactions during reading. His report describes no attempt to solve the problems as solutions were reached in some of the Smith and the Shrodes cases, but it does indicate how a teacher may study varied reactions to a piece of literature. Precisely because it does not indicate just what a teacher may do about such responses it may be a good final article. Certainly the five articles suggest that there are many questions, many positive and negative conditions, which should be studied by further research in the area of emotional responses while reading. But they also suggest that teachers and others are now trying to do something about the problem.

It would be difficult indeed to keep emotions out of the reading process. The editor and writers of this issue hope they have shown a few ways the two are intertwined.

DAVID H. RUSSELL

References

1. Anderson, J. E. "The Relation of Emotional Behavior to Learning," Forty-first Yearbook of The National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1942. 333-352.
2. Gates, A. I. "Role of Personality Maladjustment in Reading Disability," *Pedagogical Seminary*. 59:77-83, September, 1941.
3. Jones, H. E. and others. "Emotional and Social Development and the Educative Process", Thirty-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1939. 361-389.
4. Russell, D. H. "Reading Disabilities and Mental Health: A Review of Research," *Understanding the Child*. 16:24-32, January, 1947.
5. Russell, D. H. "Interrelationships of the Language Arts and Personality," *Child Development and The Language Arts*, Research Bulletin of the National Conference on Research in English. Champaign, Illinois, National Council of Teachers of English, 1953, 29-40.
6. Smith, Nila B. "Research on Reading and the Emotions," *School and Society*, 81: 8-10, January 8, 1955.
7. Witty, P. A. "Reading Success and Emotional Adjustment," *Elementary English*, 27: 281-296, May, 1950.

Creative Reading Includes Emotional Factors

by ROBERT R. NARDELLI

● SAN DIEGO STATE COLLEGE

HISTORY IS REplete with vivid examples of the old saying, "The pen is mightier than the sword," an adage which owes its credibility, at least in part, to the fact that men have been able to manipulate and stimulate great numbers of people by means of appealing to their emotions through the printed word. In addition to such diverse examples as the writings of Thomas Paine, Jefferson, and Hitler, all of which had a profound effect on history, there now is considerable research available to indicate specifically how various individuals react to words.

Two simple but significant questions should be considered in any attempt to assess the importance of the emotions in the interpretation of the printed word:

1. Are emotional factors a help or a hindrance to the reader?
2. How can emotions be used to stimulate more creative reading?

The writer believes that the emotions may be both a help and a hindrance to the reading process, depending upon the purpose for which the person is reading. The following discussion is an attempt to describe how emotional factors play a part in reading which is creative.

Creative Reading Has Been Defined

Thorndike (11:329) once com-

pared the understanding of a paragraph to solving a problem in mathematics:

It consists in selecting the right elements of the situation and putting them together in the right relations, and also with the right amount of weight or influence or force for each. The mind is assailed as it were by every word in the paragraph. It must select, repress, soften, emphasize, correlate and organize, all under the influence of the right mental set or purpose or demand.

Elements in the problem situation as described by Thorndike were considered some time ago, when a group of elementary school teachers were discussing the increased demands which modern living has made on the elementary school reading program. The tenor of the conversation drifted toward the idea that schools no longer should be satisfied with simple word mastery and paragraph comprehension.

Thereupon, one or two of the teachers asserted that they were only too grateful when their pupils managed to recognize words and master simple comprehension and would be delighted to leave other types of reading to professors at large universities.

Several teachers suggested that there was something more needed these days, possibly the ability to read between the lines. Mrs. Knight, who had

a sixth grade, added that children should be trained to go beyond the specific facts of a selection in order to draw an inference or a conclusion.

Miss Jensen was one of the skeptics. She wanted to know more about this type of reading which goes beyond conventional paragraph comprehension. "Can you tell us more about what you mean?" she asked. "Is there a name for it?"

Mrs. Knight was eager to talk about the additional demands in reading. She stated, "Many writers have referred to 'creative reading' as a necessity for today's citizens. By 'creative reading,' they mean that kind of reading where the reader makes use of his past experiences and relational thinking to arrive at some interpretation which is new or creative for him. Often, it involves an attitude of questioning and suspended judgment, or a habit of examining before accepting what is read."

Miss Jensen made a wry comment to the effect that it would be little short of astonishing if some of the less favored pupils in her fifth-grade class were to be expected to assume an attitude of suspended judgment.

Mrs. Knight was not discouraged. "But that need not be true at all," she said. "There's evidence to show us that good training and practice in the classroom will help all children in doing some creative reading." She went on to add that this was also true with regard to another aspect of creative reading, the ability to recognize authors' intentions and propaganda devices in printed materials.

Sympathy

At this point, Miss Jensen evinced a slight rise in interest and recalled an exciting experience which her class had enjoyed a few weeks previous. She told of a story which her class had been reading about the Pilgrims. The story was lavish with praise for the Pilgrims, attributing to that group a number of near-superhuman qualities. In the discussion which followed the reading of the story, one of the children volunteered the statement that he had read from another book a story which pointed to some instances where the Pilgrims had indicated the possession of ordinary human foibles.

A spirited discourse ensued, with some children rising to the defense of the Pilgrims, others to the support of the original lone dissenter. Gradually, the group decided that there was something to be said for both sides of the question. They agreed that doubtless it was true that at least SOME of the Pilgrims had a number of human faults. At the same time, the group agreed that it took much strong character to embark on a new venture as did the Pilgrims, and to bear up under the adverse conditions of the first terrible winter in Massachusetts.

Under prompting by Miss Jensen, the group saw the value of consulting more than one source, the danger of relying solely on one author. "But I didn't realize that I was encouraging any particular type of reading," concluded Miss Jensen.

"But you most certainly were," said Mrs. Knight. "You caused those children to think. In doing this thinking,

they had to break down some of the beliefs they had acquired in reading and listening to earlier stories, and they didn't like it. You helped your pupils to think of the Pilgrims not as a group of people dressed in black, eating turkey with a bunch of Indians, but as ordinary and real human beings."

(The discussion above and those reported below illustrate how various emotions played a part in the interpretations which children made of a number of reading materials. The emotion of *sympathy* (plus understanding) was evident in Miss Jensen's class. Others follow.)

Anger

At this point Mr. Baker brought his fourth grade into the teachers' conversation, recounting an instance where pupils had read different meanings into reading passages about China in their weekly news magazine. He said he and some children had been surprised at the different conclusions of various readers. In discussions about the material read, many of the children expressed dissatisfaction and even chagrin when Mr. Baker refused to single out any particular conclusion as correct. A few became annoyed at their teacher and even more at the materials on China.

Anxiety

Mr. Baker added that he was amused by the delight which was expressed by some children with their own interpretations and with the ire expressed by others, often because of differences of opinion. He stated further that he felt that some pupils had

created ideas which were not supported by the reading passage in a rather transparent effort to bolster their own particular conclusions.

Love

Mrs. Knight suggested that the occasion reported by Mr. Baker was a good illustration of a creative reading experience which could help provide guide lines for further adventures in interpretation. She began telling of a day when her sixth grade was engaged in a study of South America and, apparently, had been impressed with the love of country possessed by Simon Bolivar. A number of children volunteered that they felt the same way toward their own country and would be willing to fight for it as had Bolivar.

Sympathy and Affection

Miss Homer, of the third grade, then added, "Come to think of it, my children seemed to express real understanding and affection for forest animals in a little story which we read in connection with a conservation unit in science. While discussing the possible dangers which careless people might bring to these forest animals, a number of pupils apparently went beyond mere understanding of the problem and projected themselves into the plight of the deer, bear, and elk. The story certainly had an emotional appeal for the third grade."

Are Emotions Helpful to the Creative Reader?

In the examples cited emotional factors involved in creative reading may be said to operate in two ways:

one advantageous, the other detrimental. In the process of creative reading which calls for a true appreciation of the feelings of a character in a story, it is necessary that the reader possess a knowledge of the emotion described or implied for the character. To appreciate the feeling of apprehension of a Tom Sawyer, the loneliness of a Robinson Crusoe, or the joy of a Hans Brinker, a child himself would have had to know apprehension, loneliness, or joy.

Gates (4) study of the ability of children to interpret the emotions of others revealed that the child builds his powers of discrimination among the emotions as he grows older. Although Gates' investigation was conducted with pictures of an actress attempting to portray various emotions, the results suggest that a similar situation may exist in the problem of interpreting emotions through reading. In some of the examples discussed by the teachers above, when the reader had experienced these emotions they might help him in going beyond the specific facts of the selection, to create meaning for himself.

On the other hand, in order to read successfully a selection in which a writer is trying to "pull the wool" over the eyes of the reader, the reader must remain objective, try to push aside his emotions. It is entirely possible that training will help children to withstand the pressures of advertising in behalf of a certain toothpaste or breakfast food. At the same time, there are indications that the child will be unable to evaluate objectively materials

about which he has strong pre-conceived feelings.

Sargent (9) found that readers reacted negatively to such terms as, *czarism, dictatorship, and domination*, while reacting positively to such terms as, *cooperation, freedom, and reemployment*. Crossen (2) investigated the effect of attitudes of the reader upon qualities inherent in creative reading ability and found that unfavorable attitudes toward Negroes significantly affected the reading scores of those possessing these attitudes.

Osborne (6) found that although pupils can be taught to become aware of the methods of the propagandist, the mere awareness of these methods is not necessarily effective in developing resistance to propaganda.

Postman, Bruner and McGinnies (7) have demonstrated that personal values affect perception of words. McKillop (5) found that whereas on questions of specific fact and detail a relationship between attitude and response is seldom found, in questions of judgment, evaluation and prediction, a relationship is regularly obtained. More research is needed to indicate the extent to which children may profit from training in the emotional aspects of creative reading.

When Should Instruction in Creative Reading Begin?

DeBoer (3:254) said, "The child who reads his first line of connected discourse on the printed chart recording a group experience should be confronted with the question, 'Is it true?'" And Brownell (1) wrote that part of real expertness in problem solving is

the ability to differentiate between the reasonable and the absurd, the logical and the illogical. Further, Brownell stated that instead of being protected from error the child should many times be exposed to error and be encouraged to detect and to demonstrate what is wrong and why. Russell (8) stated that making thoughtful decisions along with reading can begin even in the first grade.

Symonds (10) pointed out that many of the points to be made in discussing how parents and teachers may help children form good habits of thinking are not the results of experimental investigation but are deductions from general psychological theory and the application of this theory to the problems of education. The conclusion may be drawn that this help should be given to children early in their schooling.

How Can the Teacher Help the Child to Improve in Creative Reading?

Research indicates that children can be helped to improve their creative reading ability. This research plus the deductions from general psychological theory to which Symonds refers have resulted in a number of specific suggestions which should prove useful in the classroom.

A number of the publishers of reading texts are including creative reading exercises to accompany the more conventional reading experiences. These exercises are stimulating and entertaining for the children.

Specifically, the following steps have been employed successfully in

various studies to help children become better creative readers:

- Children were encouraged to consult several sources before accepting one source as final.
- Children were given practice in filtering out irrelevant materials in a reading passage.
- Children were given the opportunity to organize facts they had approved or accepted, debating the positive and negative aspects of controversial statements.
- Children were helped to evaluate hypotheses or conclusions in light of the facts they had collected and organized.
- Children were aided in seeing the value of accepting a conclusion regardless of former prejudices or pre-conceived notions.
- Children were observed closely to see whether or not they were acting upon the conclusion, once they had accepted it.

It seems safe to say that a wide variety of experiences is essential to the reader who would truly understand the emotional impact which an author is attempting to make. The place of the school as a provider of background for emotional understandings is not clearly defined. It would be extremely questionable practice to introduce experiences calculated to teach a child the feeling of such emotions as sorrow, jealousy, and hate simply to insure his correct interpretation of the printed page. However, it may be assumed that

most children will have experienced most of the emotions which they will encounter in their reading if the school takes care to provide books and stories suitable to the various levels of maturation.

Whether the pupil is reading objec-

tively to find the solution to a problem, or whether he is reading a passage which demands a measure of compassion, his emotions will play a part in any conclusions he may draw. His creative reading does include emotional factors.

References

1. Brownell, William A. "Problem Solving," *The Psychology of Learning*. Forty-First Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, Public School Publishing Co., 1942.
2. Crossen, Helen J. "Effect of the Attitudes of the Reader upon Critical Reading Ability," *Journal of Educational Research*. 42:289-298, December, 1948.
3. DeBoer, John J. "Teaching Critical Reading," *Elementary English Review*. 23: 251-254, October, 1946.
4. Gates, G. S. "An Experimental Study of the Growth of Social Perception," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 14, 449-462, 1943.
5. McKillop, Anne S. *The Relationship Between the Reader's Attitude and Certain Types of Reading Response*. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952.
6. Osborne, W. W. "Teaching Resistance to Propaganda," *Journal of Experimental Education*. 8:1-17, September, 1939.
7. Postman, L. Bruner, J. S., and McGinnies, E. "Personal Values as Selective Factors in Perception," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 43:142-154, April, 1948.
8. Russell, David H. *Children Learn to Read*. New York: Ginn and Company, Chapter 14, 1949.
9. Sargent, Stansfield. "Stereotypes and the Newspapers," *Readings in Social Psychology*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1947.
10. Symonds, Percival M. "How Do Good Habits of Thinking Begin?," *Childhood Education*. 28:45-48, 61, November, 1950.
11. Thorndike, E. L. "Reading as Reasoning: A Study of Mistakes in Paragraph Reading," *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 8:323-332, June, 1917.

• • •

Six references from page 17.

17. Stauffer, R. G. "Basic Problems in Correcting Reading Difficulties," *Corrective Reading in Classroom and Clinic*. Compiled and edited by Helen M. Robinson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 79, pp. 118-126.
18. Stephenson, H. H. "Reading Difficulties," *California Teachers Association Journal*, XLVII, March 1951, pp. 1-16.
19. Strang, Ruth. "Reading and Personality Formation," *Personality*, I, 1951, pp. 131-140.
20. Tolman, Edward C. *Collected Papers in Psychology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951, pp. 1-269.
21. Vinacke, W. Edward. "Concepts and Attitudes in the Perception of Words," *Education*, 75, May 1955, pp. 571-576.
22. Young, N., and Gaier, E. L. "Implications in Emotionally Caused Reading Retardation," *Elementary English*, XXVIII, May 1951, pp. 271-275.

Emotional Factors and Reading Disabilities

by JACK A. HOLMES

● UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

THIS PAPER presents a brief theoretical consideration of the role of emotions in reading difficulties, quotes one summary of possible interrelationships, and then presents some practical implications for school practice in dealing with reading difficulties.

Theoretical Considerations

Precise split-second responses attaching integrated meanings to printed symbols constitute the essence of reading. The attachment of meanings is crucial, in either oral or silent reading, if understanding is to result. The precision, the speed, the kinds and depths of the meanings attached to the various thought units are all related and, broadly speaking, are determined by the competency levels and experience of the child doing the reading. These, in turn, may be related to certain substrata factors in the child's makeup (8).

For a particular child or adolescent, a given symbol may take on meanings which are not only cognitive, but which are conative or emotional in character (some pleasant, some indifferent, some unpleasant) (3, 11). Such "new" combinations may cause the reader difficulties as he attempts to integrate the various meanings and emotional tones. For example, an adolescent may associate very pleasant feelings with such words as *beautiful*,

face, and *radiant*. Likewise, he may feel that the words *unfortunate*, *messy*, and *pimple* are not only unpleasant, but even repulsive. On the other hand, words like *is*, *a*, *has*, *still*, etc., may be reacted to with indifference. Now, when reading the adolescent comes upon such a sentence as, "The radiance of Joan's beautiful face is marred by a few unfortunate and messy pimples," he or she must in some way integrate a compromise not only among a complex system of ideas, but also among ideas charged with emotionally pleasant and unpleasant connotations. If the young reader happens to be named Joan, or if he or she has already developed some inferiority feelings in relation to appearance because of an adolescent skin blemish, coming face to face with such a sentence while reading, might very well throw him or her into an anxiety state so severe that further reading is impossible.

In other words, whenever the child is confronted with a situation in which there are mutually incompatible choices, he is faced with a potentially anxiety-producing situation. His salvation lies in making a definitive response in one direction (be it right or wrong), or in integrating a compromise between the apparently incompatible choice-responses. If he is pushed beyond his limits, like Pavlov's dog, the child or adolescent

may develop neurotic behavior in this area. When this develops, the reaction may be, in general, of three types: aggressive, withdrawn, disorganized. All of these mechanisms exist in some degree, and may be observed in a child at one and the same time, especially if he is having trouble in reading.

Research to date has not answered the question of just what it is that causes one child to react to frustration in one direction (say, aggressive delinquency), and another child in another direction (say, submissive dependency), or yet another, as a disorganized stutterer. It is quite possible that this phenomenon is related (a) to the general emotional-climate of the child's life (e.g., rejecting parents, sibling rivalry), or (b) to the emotional-tone of the child's learning situation. Tolman (20) suggests that things learned under high emotional stress tend to be learned within a narrow or thin *cognitive map** and this makes it difficult for the child to admit later modifications in the first learned stimulus-reaction patterns. Yet, this ability to modify learned stimulus-response patterns is exactly what is necessary if learning in the area of reading is to continue; for few, if any, words have but a single meaning (21) and few, if any, have but a single emotional tone attached to them. Further, since the symbols may be combined in what is almost an infinite number of ways, the necessity of modifying meaning and adjusting emotional tones compatible with the over-all organization of the fresh

group of symbols is constantly before the child.

The complexity of the situation may be realized when it is pointed out that several other factors can also influence choices. First, there are those emotional reactions which the child associates with taboo words. Second, there are those limitations which his intelligence places upon his power to integrate symbol-meanings and emotions. Third, there is the relative strength of the child's motivation to work in the area of reading in contrast to strong interests in other areas. Finally, there are limitations placed upon the child by the competency levels of his reading and other linguistic skills.

In other words, each child or adolescent determines the unified meaning and emotional tone he will ascribe to the sentence or paragraph, not from some single, learned total association, but from an integration of a whole set of lesser associations. For convenience, these may be classified as falling into such sub-reading areas as: linguistic abilities, oculomotor abilities, personality traits, and perceptual biases. The overlap in classification is considerable, but emotional factors determining reading response are still complex (9, 15, 21).

Since getting the integrated meaning from the printed page demands that one select the appropriate sub-meanings, the sub-abilities which one brings to the problem must not be looked upon as a set of isolated abilities, but as an organized, or organizable, mass of knowledge, skills, and

*A person's idea of what leads to what.

emotions. These substrata factors must then be integrated into a *working system** ever ready to analyze out meaning from the whole paragraph, as well as synthesize the larger meanings which the individual words convey. When the working system is working well, and the material being read is hard but not too difficult, both analysis and synthesis are going on simultaneously (9). Different people may use a different set of sub-abilities in obtaining meaning from the printed page (8). In other words, "There is more than one way to skin a cat." Forcing the child to learn to read by a method that is unnatural for him may cause him to have not only reading problems, but emotional problems as well!

While emotional factors may play their part in a child's reading or learning to read, they may not loom so large as other visual, auditory, or kinesthetic factors (8). Therefore, the role of emotions, for most children, must be minor because the emotional climate of the home and the school is in general quite compatible with the child's ability to cope with it, and likewise because the intensity of the emotional tones attached to most words is seldom extreme. It is this last point which allows most children easily to shift the valence value of individual symbols from positive to negative and vice versa, in accordance with the over-all meaning of the sentence. Further, school itself is for

most children a tolerably pleasant social experience, and learning to read offers an interesting outlet to their natural curiosity and desire to learn. Unfortunately, however, what is true in general need not necessarily be true of specific or special cases!

These special cases, however, are just the ones in which we are interested in the present paper. The emotional factors are very much a part of the organism, and the individual must be equally disposed to learn by conditioning and association the emotional as well as the cognitive aspects of each new stimulus-response (11). Therefore, when strongly charged attitudes (either specific or diffused) are attached to linguistic symbols, the utility value of the learned symbol-concept is restricted by the emotionally determined attitude (2, 15, 20).

The Evidence and the Conclusions

The nature and source of emotional influences are extremely difficult to pin down experimentally. Nevertheless, the literature abounds with clinical cases which lend weight to the hypothesis that reading disabilities are or may be in some cases definitely related to emotional difficulties. The best of the experimental and clinical studies were reviewed in 1947 and again in 1952 by Russell (12, 14), and more recently, in 1955, by Gilbert and Holmes (6). The resume formulated by Gates (5) as early as 1941, following a review of both his own work and the available literature up to that time, still represents a most sagacious summary of the evidence.

*A dynamic set of sub-abilities mobilized for the purpose of solving a particular problem.

Gates' conclusions, slightly modified (12, 14), are:

- Personality difficulties are frequently but not universally associated with reading difficulties.
- In cases where they occur together personality difficulties may be causes, concomitants, or results of reading difficulties.
- Emotional difficulties usually appear as part of a constellation of difficulties causing reading retardation.
- There is no single personality pattern characteristic of reading failure and there is no proved one-to-one relationship between type of adjustment difficulties and type of reading disabilities. For example, feeling of insecurity resulting from undue home pressure for achievement may result in low reading achievement marked by withdrawal; compulsive, anxious reading marked by frequent errors; or it may result in higher achievement in reading than would be expected from mental level.
- Symptoms associated with reading difficulties are commonly aggressive reactions, withdrawing tendencies or general insecurity and apprehension.
- If emotional, adjustment disturbances are one of a group of primary causes of reading difficulties, retardation in other academic learnings often occurs.
- If reading difficulties are a cause of emotional difficulties, skilled remedial work in reading may

clear up rather easily a considerable number of difficulties. If deep-seated personality difficulties are a cause of reading difficulties, ordinary remedial work is likely to be ineffective and more intensive therapy is required.

- Diagnosis and remediation in reading are often more acceptable to children and to parents than [is diagnosis and therapy] in fundamental personality maladjustments. Accordingly, the reading aspects of a problem may be emphasized in the beginning stages of treatment.
- The above generalizations probably apply to the other language arts as much as to reading. They should all be regarded as hypotheses for further scientific study.

Practical Considerations

The Symptoms

What are the symptoms which suggest to the teacher that emotional problems are involved in the reading difficulties of her pupil? It is apparent from the literature (17, 18, 19) that the most common signs are apathetic, listless behavior accompanied by nervous irritability and fatigue; an inability to concentrate on reading, accompanied by constant restlessness and a short attention span. If the anxieties are more deep seated, the school psychologist will be particularly interested in noting the lack of reading interest and drive, the degree to which conformity is passive and ineffectual, and the tendency on the part of the poor reader to form dependent and cling-

ing relationships, coupled with a repression of his normal childhood drives to be mentally curious and physically active.

Causes

As indicated above, not all the statements made in the clinical literature relating personality difficulties causally to reading difficulties have been substantiated by definitive and scientific experiments. Nevertheless, it seems to the present writer that the pertinent hypothesis worthy of investigation today would suggest that the difficulties arise out of the child's inability to integrate a compromise from among such factors as his self-concept, the reading content, the reading process, and/or the emotional climate of the learning environment.

For instance, according to Lecky's (22) theory of self-consistency, many of the primary books cast the boy in a role which is inconsistent with the young boy's ideal of the culturally defined masculine role. "Whenever a child is given something inconsistent with his personality and is frustrated in his attempts to cope with this, it may bring on a type of chain reaction behavior wherein the original inability is caused by inconsistency of the material with his personality, and the second inability is caused by emotional instability brought on by frustration with the first material."

Perhaps the inhibitions inherent in such self-inconsistencies are also closely related to the depreciated self-concept arising in the poor reader from a real or fancied parental rejection, peer rejection, or teacher rejection. At

any rate, while lacking experimental verification, it seems safe to say the above statements also appear to gain some support from Russell's (13) contention that "identification and projection may underlie a theory that could explain how reading might affect attitudes of the reader."

Psychoremedial Reading Techniques

Since emotionally charged concept-formations which inhibit learning may result whenever the basic security needs of the child are actually frustrated over a long period of time (in contrast to occasional threats), sensible psychoremedial reading therapy will first of all center upon handling the child with understanding. An understanding teacher, school psychologist, or parent, as the case may be (and it should be all three), will, by giving the child personal attention, provide an atmosphere of acceptance for the child as he is, but with the willingness to help the child progress to a reading level that is compatible with his ability and level of aspiration—not the adult's.

The remedial teacher, or any teacher for that matter, must lend order and stability to the disorganized and tense child by being patient, sympathetic, and systematic. Further, she must stimulate the child by her own enthusiasm for life, by her enthusiasm for the subject matter, and more important, by her keen personal interest in the child. She must not only gain the child's confidence, but instill self-confidence in the child by accepting the responsibility of allowing the child to become identified with her—and

this means being someone friendly enough and competent enough so that the child feels it is a privilege to be associated with her, not a stigma. That is, his status is raised rather than lowered because of his relationship with a remedial teacher. Admiration for the teacher, first as a person, and secondly as one who has actually helped others to learn to read in the past, is the best assurance a teacher can have that the way is open for the newcomer to believe that he has with her a new and genuine chance to succeed.

Remedial treatment, however, must also stimulate motivation (1, 7) on a more tangible basis. By the use of psychological and achievement tests, the teacher must find out where the student is, and go on from there. By using appropriate reading materials and particularly by individual instruction, her remedial teaching efforts must from the very beginning result in success in reading. This is best accomplished by an "all out" attack upon the problem and by using a "reading method" which is different from that with which failure is associated.

The continued success of the remedial work, however, will call for the close and genuine cooperation of the child. This may be obtained only if he accepts the responsibility for solving his own problem. This results in what might be called "reading willingness" as a complement to "reading readiness." It is important to remember, however, that a child is not in a position to accept this responsibility

if it threatens his internal security; hence, the teacher will be careful not to overtax the child's self-respect or his ego-strength.

Dolch (4) suggests that a necessary step in successful remedial reading programs rests in "discovering the child's area of confidence . . . those words of which he is certain. Advancement from this area is achieved by pacing the materials to the interest and ability of the child so that he experiences a series of successes without defeats."

The Teacher

In all the above, the school psychologist can be of real help to the teacher. But in the end it is the teacher who must teach the child to read. For after all, successful reading depends upon the child's ability to organize his sub-abilities (visual-auditory-kinesesthetic perceptions, smooth eye-movement patterns, adequate sight vocabulary, phonetic associations, word sense, spelling, word discrimination, prefixes, suffixes, roots, general information, etc.) into a working system which will allow him to make those analyses and those syntheses which give meaning to the printed page. Not only blind spots and perceptual biases related to personality factors (11, 15, 16) must be cleared up, but deficiencies in the sub-abilities must be strengthened (8,9) if the child is ever going to learn to discriminate, assimilate, classify, generalize, remember, and apply what he reads (17). In other words, as Holmes (6,8) has elsewhere pointed out, in the long run the best psychoeducational therapy is that

which trains the tool abilities of a subject to a level which will enable him to solve his own problems.

The School Psychologist

It should not be overlooked, however, that in an estimated 3 per-cent of cases, remedial reading must for a time be given up altogether because learning to read has become incompatible with the child's (a) established emotional defenses, (b) habitual emotional offenses, or (c) generalized inhibitions. In such cases, the school psychologist must take over and work with the child intensively. The psychologist, as Osborn (10) has indicated, will probably utilize such psy-

choeducational techniques as encasement (emphasis on success in another area), such psychotherapeutic techniques as catharsis (permissive atmosphere, play therapy, projective techniques, insight therapy, non-directive therapy, etc.), or he may turn to such group therapies as psychodrama and socio-psychotherapy. If, however, the case should prove, because of brain injury or deep-seated conflict, to be too difficult for the school psychologist, then the child must be referred to a neuro-surgeon or a psychiatrist for medical diagnosis, medical treatment, psychoanalytic therapy, or perhaps even brain surgery.

References

1. Bender, I. E., Imus, H. A., Rothney, J. W. M., Kemple, C., and England, M. R. *Motivation and Visual Factors: Individual Studies of College Students*. Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College, 1942.
2. Bettelheim, B. "Mental Health and Current Mores," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 22:1 (Jan. 1952) pp. 1-87.
3. Carter, H. D., Jones, H. E., and Shock, N. W. "An Experimental Study of Affective Factors in Learning," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, March 1934, pp. 203-215.
4. Dolch, E. W. "Success in Remedial Reading," *Elementary English*, XXX, March 1953, pp. 133-7.
5. Gates, Arthur I. "The Role of Personality Maladjustment in Reading Disability," *Pedagogical Seminary*, 1941, 59, pp. 77-83.
6. Gilbert, Luther C., and Holmes, Jack A. "Reading: Psychology," *Review of Educational Research*, 1955, 25, pp. 77-91.
7. Harris, Albert J. "Motivating the Poor Reader," *Education*, LXXIII, 1953, pp. 566-574.
8. Holmes, Jack A. *The Substrata-Factor Theory of Reading*. Berkeley: California Book Co., Ltd., 1953, pp. 1-303.
9. Holmes, Jack A. "Factors Underlying Major Reading Disabilities at the College Level," *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, 1954, 49, pp. 3-95.
10. Osburn, W. J. "Emotional Blocks in Reading," *Elementary School Journal* LII, Sept. 1951, pp. 23-30.
11. Postman, Leo J. "The Experimental Analyses of Motivational Factors in Perception" in Brown, J. S., et al., *Current Theory & Research in Motivation: A Symposium*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1953, V, pp. 59-108.
12. Russell, David H. "Reading Disabilities and Mental Health: A Review of Research," *Understanding the Child*, 1947, 16, pp. 24-32.
13. Russell, David H. "Reading and the Healthy Personality," *Elementary English*, XXIX, April 1952, pp. 195-200.
14. Russell, David H. "Interrelationships of the Language Arts and Personality," *Child Development and the Language Arts*, 1952-1953, pp. 27-40.
15. Russell, David H. and Groff, Patrick J. "Personal Factors Influencing Perception in Reading," *Education*, 75, May 1955, pp. 600-603.
16. Solomon, R. L. "Emotions and Perceptions," *Claremont College Reading Conference*, 1953, pp. 69-81.

Please turn to page 10.

Therapy as a Part of Remediation

by NILDA BANTON SMITH
● NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

A NEW FRONTIER in reading remediation has opened—that of using psychotherapy as a part of the corrective program. Increasing numbers of reports on the combined use of therapy and reading instruction are appearing in educational literature. Many of these reports are informal in nature and based upon observation or experience. Others, a lesser number, are concerned with measured experimentation. All of them are stimulating, challenging, promising!

Several different approaches to therapy are being used: art therapy, language therapy, play therapy, psychodrama, individual inter-therapy, group interview therapy and tutorial group therapy. One writer reports the use of a combination of substitution, catharsis and psychodrama. An example will be given of each of these different therapeutic approaches as applied to a remedial reading situation.

This article reports some of the informal attempts to use therapy as a part of reading remediation, then describes briefly some of the more formal experimentation in the area.

Informal Reports

Art Therapy. Free expression through the medium of art has been used as a part of remediation at The Reading Institute of New York University for several years. Children at-

tending the Institute have opportunities to release their emotional stresses in the art room where they splash color, relax and express themselves creatively. They are free to portray anything they like with any available medium which they choose. The pictures a pupil makes not only provide emotional release for the child, himself, but they also furnish valuable insights into the child's emotional problems to those who are working with him. With this information the therapist and teacher are able to work more adequately with the child and more constructively with the parents who sometimes are the cause of the child's worries. A sequence of pictures made by the same child over a period of time very often gives evidence of progress in overcoming emotional stress. In other words a sequence of pictures frequently provides a record of emotional recovery.

Tom, for example, painted a picture of a woman's head on the first day that he attended The Reading Institute. The head was adorned with blond, curly hair. There were tiny blue eyes and a button of a nose in the upper part of the round space which he had provided for the face. All the rest of this space was given over to a huge, open, cavernous mouth. Day after day, and day after day Tom painted this same picture. Then, one day there was a change! He painted the same

head with the usual eyes and nose. In this picture, however, there was no mouth at all. As Tom backed away from the easel he was heard to remark: "I've shut her up for once."

Tom's pictures together with the above comment gave the art teacher, who was also a psychologist, a clue to one of Tom's most disturbing problems. The mother was called in for conference. She admitted that Tom made her so nervous that she scolded most of the time that he was in the house. The mother was counseled at this time and in several follow-up sessions. As she began to refrain from constant nagging, Tom started painting pictures on other subjects. Objects in his pictures took on more definite form, designs became more balanced and colors more clear and strong. During this same period Tom began making very rapid progress in reading. The mother, too, was making progress in regard to her difficulty. Eventually she confided that she had "pretty-well overcome" her "bad habit."

Things went very well for several weeks. Then one day Tom reverted again to painting the head. It had the same blond curls, and the blue eyes and the nose were in the right place on the face and in the right proportion. But in the lower part of the picture where the mouth should be there was a pair of curved red lips of just the right size and they were smiling and revealing a row of white teeth. Draw your own conclusions!

We are not prepared to say that a sequence of pictures reveals *reading*

progress. We have found, however, that a period of progress in overcoming an emotional problem as indicated by a sequence of free paintings usually coincides with a period of rapid progress in reading. This doesn't happen in every case but it happens frequently enough to justify further exploration of the use of art as a projective technique in diagnosing and in offering clues for treating emotionally disturbed children who are undergoing reading remediation.

Language therapy. The use of language expression as a therapeutic measure is also being encouraged at The Reading Institute. In their free compositions children's secret fears and worries are often drained off. The withdrawn child suddenly talks through written symbols; he who experiences reading failures makes all sorts of conquests in compensation; he who dislikes reading and school escapes into a new world of fantasy; and he who is nursing an injury or a wrong, counter-attacks with stories about raids on property, getting even with policemen, or destroying something others enjoy. Regardless of the type of story that comes through, it affords the writer emotional release, and it gives the teacher cues in understanding the child's problems.

Space doesn't permit further discussion of language as therapy. One example, however, will be given. This composition was written by Bill, a twelve-year old boy, during his early attendance at The Reading Institute:

The Thing

Do Not Read

B.F.

It was 12 in the night. I was in the woods. It was very dark out. I saw something. *It was the thing.* I ran and I ran but it ran too. I went up a tree. It came too. I crawled to the end of a big branch. It crawled out there, too, and it struck me. And do you know what happened? I woke up for school."

In a small oblong at the bottom of the page appeared the words "The Thing. Do Not Read." Then beneath these words were additional words which had been written with the page turned up-side down. In turning the paper around one found that the up-side down words were "The Thing is Reading."

Anyone who has read this composition will have little doubt that this boy's fear of reading and of reading failure were causing him much distress. His warnings to "Do Not Read" and his technique of writing the answer upside down at the bottom of the page indicated his guilt feelings about letting others know how he felt. All of this information was good for the instructor and psychologist to know. Expressing his fear on paper was a starting point for Bill and for his teacher in releasing the boy from his fear of reading failure.

Psychodrama. McGann (6) reported a therapeutic approach in which dramatic dialogue was used in a program of correction for reading disabilities. She described her technique as one in which two characters engage in an unbroken conversation the content of which is determined by the needs and interests of the two retarded read-

ers involved in the dialogue. Thus, the dialogue served as a vehicle for emotional release. McGann believed that her technique satisfies the emotional needs of retarded readers and facilitates rapport and motivation.

Substitution, Catharsis, Psychodrama. Osburn (7) has described methods used in removing emotional blocks in reading in the Summer Educational Clinic of the University of Washington. His methods are: disregarding reading for a time and teaching the child something that he can do successfully; letting children and parents "talk out" their troubles; using psychodrama in which a group of children dramatize some type of unacceptable behavior.

As a result of using this combination of techniques Osburn states, "These women's (parents') sickening worries seem to vanish into thin air, as if removed by a magician's wand. We have also had similar results with the children, themselves."

Measured Experiments

Play-Therapy. This type of therapy was used by Axline (1) with thirty-seven second-grade children who were seriously maladjusted in reading. These children had the opportunity to express themselves through the media of art materials, play materials, free dramatics, puppet plays, music, creative writing, telling original stories, planning, taking trips, keeping a bulletin board up-to-date, and living together in an atmosphere of complete acceptance.

There were four reading groups. Children were never compelled to

join a reading group. Most of the children, however, did join the reading groups regularly.

As a result of this program Axline reported marked gains both in reading and personal adjustment.

Bills (2) also conducted a study on the effectiveness of "Non-Directive Play Therapy with Retarded Readers." He worked with eight third-grade children.

At the end of his study Bills concluded that significant changes occurred both in reading and in emotional adjustment. He also noted that personal changes may occur in as few as six individual and three group play-therapy sessions.

Individual Interview Therapy. This type of therapy has been used successfully with several cases of retarded readers under the supervision of the writer. The results obtained in using this technique with one such case will be reported as an example.

Fred was thirteen years old, in seventh grade and read at first-grade level. His I.Q. was 103. Fred had been exposed to reading instruction throughout the grades including his present seventh grade and periodically he had received in addition, special remedial instruction. None of this work, however, seemed to have any effect in improving his reading ability.

Fred's history as revealed by teachers' reports showed that Fred had always been resentful of criticism, easily angered, had a tendency to give up quickly, was aggressive and "a continuous talker." Projective techniques indicated that Fred was the subject of

many frustrations, and that these frustrations had left him with feelings of hostility and anxiety. Parental rejection was found to be one of his major concerns.

The psychologist held ten sessions of individual interviews with Fred. These sessions were devoted to informal conversation between Fred and the psychologist. During each session Fred had an opportunity to talk about his problems, and the psychologist interjected questions or remarks here and there designed to help Fred in relieving himself of his guilt and anxiety feelings. Several conferences were also held with the parents who, as previously indicated, had reached the point of rejecting their child.

At the end of the ten sessions of individual interview, the psychologist conducted eight sessions of remedial reading work with some time in each session devoted to "just talking." Following the eighth session with the psychologist, Fred received remedial reading instruction without interview three times a week for six weeks.

As a result of this treatment, which combined individual interview therapy and remedial reading instruction, Fred made the first gains in reading improvement that he had made since he was in the first grade. At the beginning of the experiment he was reading at first-grade level. This level was indicated both by formal tests and an informal check with the use of readers. At the end of the experiment he was reading at third-grade level as measured by the same instruments. Fred needed more work to achieve up to

his capacities, but parents and teachers reported marked improvement in behavior.

Similar results have been obtained in using individual interview therapy with other cases under the writer's supervision — cases who have stubbornly refused to yield to remedial reading techniques alone.

It should be noted that Ephron (3) has reported a series of individual interviews with remedial reading cases. While she gives no data on the effect of such interviews, her book is very illuminating in regard to interview techniques.

Kunst (5) also has reported on work done in using individual interview therapy. This clinician integrated remedial reading instruction with therapy. No measured results are offered but the description of techniques is well worth reading.

Group Interview Therapy. This technique was used as a medium of experimentation by Fisher (4). In his investigation he used as subjects thirty boys who were residents of Children's Village, an institution for delinquent boys. These boys were all more than three years retarded in reading. The larger group was divided into three smaller groups of ten each, equated for reading achievement and intelligence. One group received only remedial reading, another received only group interview therapy, the third group received both group interview therapy and remedial reading. As a result of his experiment Fisher found that the group which had therapy alone made greater gains in reading

than the non-therapy group, and that the group which received both therapy and reading did not show significantly greater improvement in reading than the non-therapy group. Fisher suggests that in the group that received therapy and remedial reading, the negative attitudes toward remedial reading and the remedial reading teacher, which were not dealt with therapeutically, impeded their progress. He drew the definite conclusion that meeting the emotional needs of children who have a reading disability is an important factor in the correction of reading retardation.

Tutorial Group Therapy. The most recent study with which the writer is familiar is a doctoral dissertation conducted by Roman (8) on the use of "Tutorial Group Therapy" with retarded readers. His "Tutorial Group Therapy" consisted of the integration of remedial reading and group therapy techniques within the same sessions.

The twenty-one subjects of this study were delinquent boys in the Treatment Clinic of the Manhattan Children's Court, New York. All of them were retarded two or more years in reading. The boys were divided into three equated groups. Tutorial therapy was used with one group, remedial reading was used with another group, and interview group therapy was used with the third group. The results gave clear-cut evidence that the group that had the integrated therapy and reading treatment together made very superior gains.

The various reports above together with many others of a similar nature,

indicate a trend toward the inclusion of therapy as a part of reading remediation. This trend stems from our modern concept of the interrelationship of reading difficulties with other aspects of child development. While the reading difficulty of an individual is often specific, we have come to realize that in the broader sense it usually is related to a group or syndrome of difficulties. Therefore, it would appear that effectual treatment should include both specific reading remediation and also therapy for personality difficulties, rather than being confined to work with a certain set of mental processes having to do with the act of reading in itself.

It is particularly noteworthy that experimentation in this area includes

many different approaches to therapy. The future success of the use of therapy in a remedial reading program will be enhanced if therapists choose wisely the particular therapeutic technique which is most appropriate for a given group or individual. In reading there can never be one method which assures most successful results in all cases. The teacher of remedial reading needs to have at his command many different techniques so that he can apply the particular combination needed for any one case. So should the therapist be able to use many different therapeutic approaches. When we have working in combination a teacher and a therapist so equipped, then may we expect maximum results for disabled readers with emotional difficulties.

References

1. Axline, Virginia M. "Non-Directive Therapy for Poor Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, II (1947), 68.
2. Bills, R. E. "Non-Directive Play Therapy with Retarded Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, II (1950), 140-149.
3. Ephron, B. *Emotional Difficulties in Reading*. New York: The Julian Press, 1953.
4. Fisher, Bernard. *An Investigation of the Effectiveness of Group Therapy—for the Remediation of Reading Disabilities*. New York: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, 1952.
5. Kunst, M. S. "Psychology Treatment in Reading Disability," *Clinical Studies in Reading I*, No. 68. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949, 123-140.
6. McGann, Mary. "Dramatic Dialogues for Simultaneous Treatment of Reading and Personality Problems," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXXVIII (February 1947), 96-104.
7. Osburn, Worth J. "Emotional Blocks in Reading," *The Elementary School Journal*, XLII (September 1951), 23-30.
8. Roman, Melvin, *Tutorial Group Therapy*, New York: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, New York University, 1955.

• • •

From page 54.

are receiving their high school education. It is sincerely hoped that many high school faculties will "discover" and use this book for the benefit of their students. A program such as the one here discussed may well serve as a means

of bringing life and meaning to high school training which has, for too long, failed to meet the needs of adolescents.

Miriam M. Reinhart

Bridgewater State Teachers College
Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Bibliotherapy

by CAROLINE SHRODES

● SAN FRANCISCO STATE COLLEGE

THE PHILOSOPHER, the critic, and the artist through the centuries have attributed to the imaginative writer not only intuitive understanding of man's motives and his nature but also power to influence his thinking, to move his heart, and even to alter his behavior. More recently psychiatrists and psychologists have acknowledged that the novelist and playwright have plumbed the deep reaches of man's nature and often anticipated the discoveries of science. Bibliotherapy, drawing upon the insights of both artist and scientist, is grounded in the theory that there is an integral relationship between the dynamics of the personality and the nature of vicarious experience. It is a process of dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and imaginative literature which may engage his emotions and free them for conscious and productive use.

Facets of Bibliotherapy

Bibliotherapy is made possible by the "shock of recognition" the reader experiences when he beholds himself, or those close to him, in a story or some other piece of literature. So successfully does the skilled writer create an illusion of reality that, as Freud says, "he is able to guide the current of our emotions, dam it up in one direction and make it flow in another." What is the nature of this interaction

that may result, on the one hand, in distortion of the author's meaning and self deception or, on the other hand, in understanding and insight?

Reading, like all other human behavior, is a function of the total personality. When we read fiction or drama, no less than when we work, meet people, teach, create, or love, we perceive in accordance with our needs, goals, defenses, and values. Parallel in substance and function to the primary phases of psychotherapy, the vicarious experience induced by reading includes: (1) identification, including projection and introjection, (2) catharsis, and (3) insight. The reader will abstract from the work of art only what he is able to perceive and organize. Hence, he may introject meaning that will satisfy his needs and reject meaning that is threatening to his ego. In either case what he experiences and feels determines what he perceives in the book and what meaning he attaches to it.

Bibliotherapy, like deep therapy, can be effective in breaking the circular processes in perceiving. These include the recurrent ideas which lend support to our image of ourselves and of our relationship to others and the practice of confusing real experience with the symbol, and of reacting to the symbol as we do to our own emotional conflicts. In deep therapy the relationship between therapist and

patient provides an external frame of reference by means of the transference, which may free the patient by enabling him to re-live early traumatic experiences in an atmosphere of neutrality and acceptance. If the therapy is successful, he will gradually be able to differentiate between the early fear or guilt or hate and its later symbolic recurrence. Thereby he may acquire a new perspective of his experience and of himself in relation to it, an insight that liberates him from the bondage it has imposed. Similarly, bibliotherapy provides a comparable situation for "breaking the vicious circle." It offers a new frame of reference which extends the reader's awareness and enriches his understanding. The degree to which his experience is extended depends upon the strength of the emotional attitudes evoked. If a character strongly arrests his attention, and identification may be made which, in effect, represents a transference of emotion from a previous experience to the vicarious experience. A positive identification is one that tends to enhance the reader's self regard and may provide a model for emulation. A negative identification is usually engendered because of threat to his image of himself and takes the form of projection on to the character the feelings which have been repressed because they are unacceptable to the ego. However, in inducing these projections, the reading process may serve as a catalyst to free his emotions from their unconscious roots. Murray has pointed out:

It is better to make allies than

enemies of one's emotions. To rid oneself of troublesome projections one must become aware of them . . .

Literature as Experience

Literature in its direct and concrete representation of life engages the emotions and enables the reader to re-live his own experience. He may then view it freshly from the perspective of the detached observer rather than imbedded in the conventional summations of experience which often take the form of simple and unrealistic clichés about life such as, "It always works out for the best"; "It was meant to be"; "Mother knows best." In a work of literature the artist has organized the chaotic fragments of human experience, endowing them with meaning, but not imposing judgment. It is of the very essence of fiction or drama to depict experience differing only in degree from that of the reader. Hence attitudes of anger and contempt, sympathy and understanding, are inevitably invoked. One cannot remain neutral in the presence of human beings in action. Literature, being at once phantasy and reality, permits the reader an illusion of standing apart and of being involved. Thus he is able to be both spectator and participant. Under the impact of emotion he may move about in a symbolic world which is inaccessible to him in life. He will bring to bear on a fictional situation, his predispositions, the circumstances of his life, his unique perspective, and in adding them up in relation to what is given, he may be compelled to re-evaluate his own experience.

On the other hand, vicarious experience may be too threatening to the reader's concept of himself to permit what has been repressed to become conscious. Instead of viewing his own life in a new frame of reference, which may result in a more realistic appraisal of his experience, he may project his anxieties and fears upon the characters the artist has created. However, even this seeming failure to gain insight offers valuable clues in a therapeutic approach to reading. It enables the instructor to understand the motivations of the reader, to recognize his defenses, and to give them support.

We have said that the nature of vicarious experience is determined by the personality of the reader; hence it may simply reflect his concept of himself, his relationship to others, and his view of the world, but it may also transform them. The illustrations that follow suggest how the reader's recognition of himself augments his self regard, gives him a feeling of belonging, and enables him to become aware of facets of his experience that he heretofore did not acknowledge. We shall note how a simple identification with a character may result in strengthening the reader's defenses and providing a rationalization for his failure; and how it may culminate in re-living a disturbing experience, in reappraisal of himself and those close to himself and those close to him, and, thereby, in recovery of energy for constructive expression. The examples given are college students but the ideas, if not the materials used, probably apply to children and adolescents.

Some Cases of Identification

When identification with a character takes place, it involves a recognition of similarity between the character and oneself. A young college freshman, who had never before felt any personal involvement in what he read, commented as follows on Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*:

The stories gave me a frightened doubt that I myself was being portrayed in an exaggerated fashion.

Since the identification proceeded from a real correspondence between his own motivations and those of the character, his self recognition represents insight. His diction betrays both the shock of discovery and implied distaste. Since the portrayal, however, seemed to him exaggerated, the feeling of recognition was acceptable to him.

If the character with whom the reader identifies is unrealistic in coping with his problems, if his adjustment to life seems maladaptive, the recognition of himself in the character may provide a powerful deterrent to his continuation of his own life pattern. Such was the case of a female Mrs. Mitty, who, on reading Thurber's story, was startled to find that Mitty's fantasies were like her own. While most of the day she envisioned herself in command of her destiny and that of others, the remaining hours she languished in unquestioning subservience to her despotic husband. Her strong identification with Mr. Mitty permitted a detachment that enabled her to become aware of the split in her own life.

Identification may lead, on the other

hand, to augmenting one's self regard through giving one a sense of belonging. A bright twenty-three year old girl, after reading *Sons and Lovers*, confessed with obvious astonishment, "I thought I was the only person in the whole world who had a mother who was possessive and domineering." A disturbed veteran in his late thirties, who had given up a business career and returned to school to study writing, found solace in his identification with writers in whose journals the same kind of doubts and fears that he had experienced were recorded:

I've been thought by my family to be queer and peculiar, but to be humored. My family have tolerated me and humored me, but there is no real kinship. So it helps to read about these people . . . It was wonderful the way Anderson could close up shop and walk away from business and write . . . What made it difficult was my brother was such a dominant person; he accepted the proposition that worldly success was important to achieve . . . Success seemed unimportant to me. I know what I wanted to do—always to write, but doing it was difficult. My brother was indulgent toward me—even my father was—but I had the feeling they both thought I was off my trolley. So these journals you can see gave me a feeling of companionship. I *knew* before I wasn't really alone, but I wasn't able to *feel* it. Do you know how that can be? A person can know a thing in his mind, but he can't feel it. These journals enabled me to *feel* it.

Insight into Other Personalities

In addition to self recognition, identification may take the form of recognition of others. The reader may for the first time see his mother or father with objectivity through the medium of imaginative literature. Such insight may not only be productive of a more realistic attitude toward their limitations and their strengths, but may also bring relief from the anxiety and guilt that accompany feelings of fear or hostility toward them. A Chinese-American girl alternately felt resentful and guilty because she had defied her parents first by attending college and then by refusing to marry the man of their choice for whom she felt no love. She recognized in Christina and Theobald in *The Way of All Flesh* the same qualities that enraged her in her own parents. But she also perceived that they were severe and bigoted, like Ernest's parents, because they had been subjected to pressures beyond their control. This recognition gave her the necessary detachment to continue in college without feelings of ambivalence and guilt.

Alexander and French stress the importance of undergoing a new emotional experience to undo the morbid effects of past emotional experiences. Identification with characters and situations in literature permits a re-experience of the old, unsettled conflict but with a new solution. In some cases the identification is sufficiently strong to take the reader back in time and place to his own childhood. One student, a middle aged teacher, thought at first that *Sons and Lovers* was beautiful:

I spent more time in thinking about it than in the actual reading. It aroused many memories of my early life. They came to me in the middle of the night, in the street car. Memories of my mother, of her death, of her punishment of me, of my brother's scorn of me.

Later she commented on not being able to bear reading it and offered this explanation:

I never loved my mother. That is a dreadful thing to say, a dreadful thing to live through. I was happier when I was away from her. When I came home I was apt to be cross, sensitive, and unpleasant. My mother's spells of blues depressed me. Also she dominated me. I was ashamed of my attitude toward her so I never admitted it. . . . I was entirely too docile all my life, even submissive. That's why I hated the book even while I thought it was beautiful. It made me see how many years of misery I caused myself. I didn't like to admit I was so submissive. Also I didn't like to see my mother as she really was. Since her death I have idolized her. But now I know she wasn't mean like the mother in the book, nor spying and hypocritical. But she was efficient, too busy, ambitious, and brought up to believe in children's explicit obedience. I should wipe from my mind both the picture of a perfect mother and the lingering resentment toward her.

The sympathy engendered for Paul was sufficiently strong to dissolve her own guilt and to uproot her hitherto

repressed feelings. She was able, for the first time, to recognize the hostility she had felt toward her mother. Furthermore, in giving expression to her emotions as well as her reason, she was able to view her relationship with her mother in a new perspective and to differentiate between Paul's mother and her own mother. In so doing she was freed from the ambivalence that had tormented her and was emotionally ready to make the healthy resolution:

I should wipe from my mind both the picture of a perfect mother and the lingering resentment toward her.

The Teacher and Bibliotherapy

We have presented a *rationale* for bibliotherapy and some illustrations of the interaction between the personality of the reader and the characters with whom he has identified, a fusion which has enabled him to re-live and re-assess his own experience. It must be remembered, however, that bibliotherapy is a demanding and rigorous discipline, which is not always productive of insight. Not all teachers are prepared to extend the scope of the reading program in this direction. Nevertheless, in spite of many obvious differences between the training and goal of the teacher of reading and that of the psychotherapist, both are concerned with fostering mental health. And regardless of the intent of the teacher, reading is a complex act involving the whole personality; a source of threat or of solace; a cause of separation of the emotions and the intellect or of their integration. Hence,

the greater the teacher's awareness of the dynamics of reading, the more success will he have in enlisting the imaginative artist as an ally in helping his students find coherence and value in their lives.

For most students a therapeutic approach to reading will be of most benefit as a kind of preventive therapy. At the very least it is likely to arouse an interest in books and help the student to find meaning in them. In some cases there may be a delayed reaction. A book that at the time of reading merely entertained him may become a part of his mind's store of images, a segment of his experienced world, a touchstone for his evaluation of experience, a salutary reminder of danger, a clue to understanding his motives, a clarification of reality, a strategy for coping, or a vision of order. For others there may be immediate results of increased self awareness and

acceptance and a greater capacity to maintain satisfying human relationships. Finally, for some there may be a gradual acquisition of values, an antidote for those unconsciously incorporated from parental admonitions; from the brittleness and cynicism of many Hollywood productions; or from the success myth fostered by "self help" books, resplendent advertisements, and other mass media. Values that will guide and enrich our students' lives will not be superimposed from without but will grow out of the discovery of all of the facets of their personalities, the talents, curiosity, skills, and aspirations that enable them to know who they really are, what they may become, how they may relate to others. To these ends the imaginative writer contributes, for he is able to teach "the human heart, through its sympathies and antipathies, the knowledge of itself."

• • •

1955 Institute on Reading to Emphasize Basic Skills in Reading

Basic Skills in Reading is the theme of the 1955 Institute on Reading, which will be held in Philadelphia, November 15-19. The emphasis will be on differentiated guidance for the development of permanent and worthwhile interests in reading, versatility and independence in phonics, and thinking and related aspects of comprehension.

The Institute will consist of demonstrations, lectures, discussions, and small group seminars. They will be

focused on reading needs in classroom situations from kindergarten through college.

Demonstrators and speakers will include: Dr. Matilda Bailey, Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Miss Dilys Jones, Dr. Ethel Maney, Mrs. Elizabeth Nemoy, Miss Ruth E. Oaks, Dr. Linda C. Smith, Miss Carolyn M. Welch, Mrs. Rosemary Green Wilson, Miss Josephine Wolfe and others.

Persons interested should write to the Betts Reading Clinic, 257 West Montgomery Avenue, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

Emotional Responses to a Short Story

by JAMES R. SQUIRE

● UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
BERKELEY

MOST TEACHERS have observed the impact of some story on the pleasant or unpleasant emotional responses of a pupil. How measurable is the emotional involvement when an individual reads a short story? To what extent do a reader's comments on a story after the reading has been completed present an accurate picture of his responses while reading the story? In what ways may emotional reactions color the readers appreciation of a short story? A few tentative answers to such questions may be gleaned from a plot study of the responses of four fifteen-year-old boys to the short story, *Prelude*, by Lucile Vaughan Payne¹. Although these boys were at the high school level, the method and possibly the results of the study are applicable to other levels.

Prelude is the story of Nancy Holister, a high school sorority girl, who shares an interest in music with Stephen Karalodis, a boy who is working his way through school as a janitor. Nancy's interest in Stephen conflicts sharply with the values of her sorority sisters. Her friends taunt her and she avoids discussing the boy in their presence. Elected queen of the school prom, Nancy asks Stephen to escort her. When the boy arrives without a corsage and in an ill-fitting tuxedo,

Nancy must decide whether or not to accompany him to the dance and accept humiliation before her friends. She recognizes the moment of moral decision as one which may affect her permanent values, and she elects to accompany Stephen.

Two of the boys who read the story had a favorable impression after reading; the other two disliked the story. Frequently such final judgments are accepted as indicating the extent to which readers have been affected by a particular selection. Too often perhaps we assume that only the readers who enjoy a story have been emotionally involved, that the logical consequence of involvement in a story is enjoyment and appreciation. The cases of some of these four boys tend to indicate otherwise.

The responses of these boys to *Prelude* were recorded during the process of reading as well as at the end of reading. The story was separated into six carefully predetermined divisions, and each division was presented individually to the reader in an interview situation. Immediately following the reading of each division, each subject was asked to describe freely any ideas, feelings, or impressions which occurred to him regarding the plot, the characters, the ideas in the story, or the author's method. An interview of approximately one hour was required to permit the reading of the

¹Originally published in *Seventeen*, 1947. Reprinted in A. H. Lass and Arnold Horowitz, (eds.), *Stories for Youth*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950.

six divisions and the recording of reactions. These responses were recorded on a disc cutter and were later transcribed. An analysis of the content of these data was then applied in order to classify each separate response (a single idea) in one of seven categories. Here we are concerned with only one category.

The degree of a reader's emotional involvement in a story may be estimated by examining the percentage of his total responses which indicate some degree of identification with or rejection of a character. Such reactions express the feelings of the reader and range from sympathetic approval or mild disapproval of a character to close empathy with or severe rejection of a character. In this study all such responses were coded as indicating self involvement. The percentages of total responses indicating self involvement to each division of *Prelude* are given in the accompanying table for the four boys to be considered. For comparative purposes, the average percentages of 26 boys in the same age group are also included.

Percentages of Total Responses to *Prelude*
Which Indicated Self Involvement

	Average 26 Boys	Ernest	Dick	Milt	David
Div. 1	1.5	10.1	0.	0.	4.5
Div. 2	3.9	2.2	0.7	7.5	10.6
Div. 3	2.6	3.6	0.	7.5	7.6
Div. 4	3.5	0.	0.7	4.5	7.6
Div. 5	2.4	0.	2.0	0.	4.5
Div. 6	2.9	7.9	0.	4.5	0.
Total	16.9	23.8	3.3	23.9	34.8

(For the 26 boys, for example, an average of 16.9 per cent of all of the responses to the story were coded under Self Involvement, of which 1.5 per cent

were to Division 1, 3.9 per cent to Division 2, etc.)

Of the four boys Ernest and Dick reported enjoying *Prelude*, whereas David and Milt disliked the story. Yet more than one-third of David's responses to the story involved emotional identification or rejection, the highest percentage of any of the four boys and more than double the average percentage for 26 boys. Were this analysis confined only to examining final responses after reading the story (the responses to Division 6), a different picture would have emerged. An analysis of the development of the responses of each boy will indicate that the final reactions present an accurate picture of the responses only for Dick, the least involved of the four.

Ernest

Ernest is a piano player who appreciates music and has experienced the rejection of this interest in his peer group. He instantly detects a parallel between his own experiences and certain incidents in the story. "I understand this story pretty well because I've been playing the piano for ten years myself," he says. "I understand the girl's feelings toward music." His identification is the greatest in reading those divisions in which music is of major importance (Divisions 1 and 6). His emotional involvement tends to decrease during the development of the story as other factors complicate Nancy's dilemma (Nancy's growing attachment for the boy, the sorority's reaction to Stephen's foreign background and his low social status, etc.) This pattern of high initial involvement

runs counter to the general tendency for the entire group of 26 boys and may be attributed to the declining resemblance of Nancy's situation to Ernest's. Ernest lives in a middle class, suburban community in which his family has been social leaders for at least two generations. The complications of social and economic prejudices may seem to him matters of intellectual rather than emotional concern. Moreover, like many boys in this age group, Ernest does not yet appear to have developed any overt social interest in the opposite sex. Thus he seems unable to retain his high degree of emotional involvement in Nancy's problem even though he continues to read with interest. His identification increases only in the final division when music again becomes an important experience to Nancy (her final decision to accompany the boy occurs after hearing him play the piano).

Throughout the reading most of Ernest's identifications are with Nancy, sex in his case being no deterrent. He expresses sympathy for the boy on several occasions and some mild disapproval of the sorority girls. He responds favorably to the entire story because of the somewhat superficial parallel which he sees in Nancy's interest in music. This he freely admits: "The person who wrote this story must have experienced this himself . . . He had to actually live it to write it down . . . Cause I've had experiences like that myself" (i.e., the music encouraging Nancy to make her decision). The pattern of his responses illustrates how identification may be increased when

events in a story parallel the reader's experiences, an observation which has been noted by several writers².

Dick

Dick responds favorably to the entire story but an analysis indicates that his responses are almost devoid of emotional content. The few of his reactions which were coded as indicating self involvement are mild, momentary expressions of identification. He would be as angry as Nancy and would "feel as funny" as Stephen if someone acted as the sorority girls around him. Dick's basic response is one of factual narration. He repeats the story much as if he were asked to retell it. Indeed fewer than one-sixth of his responses are even classified as attempts to interpret the meaning of the story or the nature of the characters.

Dick is average in intelligence and reading ability. Other boys of similar ability display markedly different response patterns. Moreover, Dick is a Negro who has surely experienced peer rejection in ways similar to that faced by Stephen in the story. Although some repression of Dick's emotional reactions is conceivable, the possibility does not appear to be likely inasmuch as a similar pattern is revealed in his reactions to three other stories with differing content. In addition, an observer who noted his comments in class discussion over a period

²Cf. Henry C. Meckel, "An Exploratory Study of the Responses of Adolescents to Situations in a Novel," Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1946, p. 187; David H. Russell, "Identification Through Literature," *Childhood Education*, 25:397-401 (May, 1949); Walter Loban, *Literature and Social Sensitivity*, Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1954, pp. 22-23.

of eight weeks detected identical tendencies. Dick's reactions to *Prelude* are interesting because they suggest either that he did not detect any similarities between his own experience and those presented in the story or that parallel experiences do not necessarily lead to identification if the reader is predisposed to react without emotional involvement.

Milt

Milt dislikes *Prelude* and he gives as his reason a dislike for the ending. As in the case of Ernest, approximately 24 per cent of his responses were coded under self involvement, but the development of his responses differs considerably. An alert, intelligent reader, Milt lives in a large city and attends a comprehensive high school. He had previously been a member of a high school fraternity, but his experiences at school and at home, where his mother is a social worker, had brought him into contact with individuals from various social and economic groups. Milt readily understands Nancy's dilemma, and unlike Ernest, the musician, he perceives the conflict in terms of the social values involved. He expresses initial surprise, for example, when Nancy invites Stephen to her home because he knows "a lot of gals who are like that and they're afraid of what other people will think if they go around with someone like that." Unlike Ernest, however, Milt does not identify with Nancy. Instead he concentrates on rejecting the behavior of Nancy's friends. His emotional reaction grows in intensity, and the percentage of his involvement

scores increases perceptibly, when the girls participate prominently in the action (Divisions 2, 3, 4 and 6). He admits that he is almost "bowled over" by the girls and tends to be moved toward action when he comments, "I would have gone over and thrown them out" or "You kind of want to go to the dance and defend him (Stephen)."

This intense emotional rejection of the sorority girls leads Milt to lose objectivity and reject the ending of *Prelude*. That this is the case is suggested by the absence of any involvement statements in his responses to Division 5, the section in which Nancy debates the basic conflict in values. Milt clearly lacks any emotional concern for the central experience of the story, although his statements indicate an intellectual comprehension of the problem. He is emotionally interested only in anticipating Nancy's revenge on the girls, and when the story is resolved by Nancy's decision to accompany Stephen, Mike feels cheated. He wants the story to continue until Nancy triumphs at the dance. Thus his responses suggest one way in which emotional reactions may cause a reader to misinterpret and ultimately to reject a story.

David

David's rejection of *Prelude* is also based on emotional factors. More than a third of his total responses were coded as indicating self involvement, but none of these occur in the final response to the story. An examination of these responses reveals David to be an extremely sensitive reader who

identifies closely with the feelings and behavior of *several* characters in the story. He empathizes with both Nancy and Stephen at different times, tends to reject her parents (because of their ambivalent attitude toward the boy), and is sensitive to the "warmth" of Stephen's home as against the "coldness" of Nancy's. So strongly is his response to the story dictated by emotion that when he is unable to feel into a situation, he comments on this fact. ("Strangely, I didn't — although it seemed to me that I should — feel some irritation toward her friends.") This general emotional approach to the story colors his responses to the first five divisions but shifts perceptibly in his final response. Here his approach is dominated by intellectual statements which attempt to assess the story as one which he dislikes. The reason seems clear: "Altogether, I didn't like the story . . . If I had any idea of what the story was going to be, it wouldn't be one which I would pick to read myself, mainly because of the personal which I don't like in any story—Any story where anybody can be made . . . (to) appear vain or embarrassed or any humiliation, I don't like in a story." So intensely does David feel the emotions of the characters as he reads that their unpleasant experiences become his own, and his only defense is to reject the story.

Certain information on David's background suggests an explanation for the intensity of his reactions to this selection. An only child, his father was killed in World War II, and he was reared by his mother under rather restricted economic circumstances. In-

tellectually able, he has tended to be an isolate in peer group activities. He readily admits that he has been regarded as a "brain" and that his interests (chess, scientific research) depart radically from those of his peers. His personal problems of social isolation and economic hardship closely parallel the problems of Stephen in *Prelude*. As in the case of Ernest, the similarity seems to increase identification, but for David the experience is so painful that it ultimately turns him against the story. Apparently parallels between one's experience and the behavior and feeling of a character contribute to enjoyment only if these are of desirable kind.

Summary

This brief analysis of the responses of four selected boys to a single short story can do little more than to suggest some of the effects which emotional factors may have on the reader's responses to fiction. Clearly these cases seem to suggest that individuals respond differently during the process in reading than they do at the end of reading a story and that the intensity of the reader's emotional response may shift dramatically during the process of reading. A reader's enjoyment of or dislike for a particular selection may sometimes be attributed to the extent to which he has been emotionally involved in his reading. However, the slight degree of involvement of Dick in *Prelude* suggests that some readers may enjoy a story without being moved to identify with or to reject characters. These reactions to *Prelude* tend to support the hypothesis

that identification increases when incidents in the literary selection parallel experiences in the lives of the reader, but such identification does not always result in a favorable response to the story. In addition, strong emotional involvement which is not checked by rational objectivity may distort the reader's interpretation as in Milt's reading of *Prelude*. All of these relationships need to be studied further.

This analysis considered only the

emotional identifications and rejections of the reader. Responses to the beauties of form, language, and style may involve the reader's emotions in other ways. The cases presented here do tend to demonstrate, however, that behind many final judgments on stories are deep personal emotions. Some insight into the way in which these emotions affect the reader may be obtained by studying the responses of individuals as they are reading.

• • •

The Relation of Reading to Development in the Language Arts*

by RUTH STRICKLAND

● UNIVERSITY OF INDIANA

READING and the other language arts form a network of two-way avenues over which values flow in both directions at all times. The relationship of reading to the other language arts changes from time to time as the reader grows in personal maturity, in language power, and in reading skill. Gains in one area are almost certain to result in gains in other areas. Though reading is frequently the enriching force, it is in itself enriched through use.

A little child listens and talks long before he learns to read. His early growth in reading is built upon the language background he has acquired through listening, observing and experiencing. If he has learned in his home experience to trust himself and others and to assume some responsibility for himself, he has probably developed a good deal of language skill.

If he has also developed initiative and some interest in accomplishing the little tasks that children set for themselves, his language development has probably kept pace. The ease with which he learned to read is dependent in large measure upon the extent and quality of his language background. If the language a child has learned in his environment is too different from the language used at school he finds it difficult to feel comfortable at school and to accept and imitate what he hears. An individual's language is an intimate part of him and to alter it undermines his confidence and threatens his security. The child from a good language environment finds in books the kinds of words and sentences he hears and uses while the child who has always heard and used poor lan-

*Delivered at the joint session of ASCD and ICIRI, Chicago, March 5, 1955.

guage finds the choice and arrangement of words strange and unfamiliar.

Reading calls for recognition of symbol patterns, clothing them with meaning from one's own thought and experience, reacting to them, and integrating the meaning of words into sentences, paragraphs, pages, and stories. For some children this is a difficult and confusing process. Their mental pictures of home and family life, for instance, do not match the pictures in the book and they cannot read with meaning what lacks meaning for them.

Most teachers of beginners are well aware of the relationship of language to reading. They strive to build up the child and prepare him for success in learning to read through enriching his experience, clarifying his concepts, and building new ones, and helping him to grow in social and emotional as well as intellectual maturity. They read and tell stories, both to interest children in books and increase their eagerness to learn to read and also to make the flow of language in stories familiar to children so that the integration of words into stories will come easier in their reading. Textbooks in reading for the beginning grades tend to use only words which are familiar to the majority of children so that learning to recognize the words may not be complicated by need for learning meaning as well.

As children learn to read, the time comes when the language used in their reading materials is on a more mature level than the language they use in their conversation. When the

complexity of the sentences a child is called upon to read goes far beyond the sentences he uses in his own speech, it is difficult for him to read fluently. When the level of vocabulary goes beyond that which he can comprehend through listening, he will have difficulty with comprehending what he reads.

Incidentally, one wonders whether the fondness of some children for comics may not be in part the fact that the level of language used in the comics is their own level or the level they are accustomed to hear. In contrast, the carefully chosen words woven into the well-written sentences of their textbooks and story books seem not only unfamiliar but actually not true to life.

As children progress through the elementary school each of them eventually reaches a point at which his reading materials provide more varied patterns of expression and a better choice of words than he is in the habit of using. If he is given help to understand clearly the content of what he is reading he can learn to find pleasure in new forms of expression and fit them into his speech. The teacher who takes time now and then to call attention to interesting expressions, vivid descriptions, and happily chosen words, will find children increasingly aware of them. Eventually, many of the children will be striving in their own writing and speech to paint pictures vividly and to express meaning clearly and forcefully.

By fourth-grade level, new vocabulary problems appear in children's

reading. Each of the content subjects adds to the accumulating total of new words or new meanings for old words. The social studies call on children to expand their concepts of time, space, and quantitative relationships. Simple words which the children can recognize with ease have to be fitted into new settings and conceived of in new ways. The word "plain" which previously meant "simple" or "clear" now means also a type of terrain. The word "mouth" which was formerly thought of as applying to people, animals, and bottles now belongs also to rivers. Abstract ideas which children cannot experience in any way have to be added to their mass of expanding concepts.

Reading in the content subjects presents problems but it is also rich in values. According to Fay¹ in an article in *THE READING TEACHER* research indicates that the fact and concept load in many of the materials in the content subjects is unduly heavy and variations in format lead to confusion. Materials are often uninteresting and unappealing to children and the readability of the materials is often significantly harder than most reading textbooks. Authors who are steeped in the content themselves tend to assume greater background than children actually have. These are formidable problems but need for surmounting them provides challenge to both teacher and children.

Above all else, the problems which lie in the reading materials for the content subjects call for changes in time-

worn teaching techniques. There is little value in assigning the reading of difficult content and checking on the reading through recitation. Many children become adept at repeating the content they have read yet when they engage in conversation about it, show clear evidence of lack of understanding. Content materials need to be read *with* children so that the teacher can help them to build clearer mental pictures than they could conjure up for themselves. Children need help to put meaning into the material, to react to it, fit it into the mass of their previous experience and knowledge and arrange it all in proper perspective. Children can enjoy working hard on tasks which cause them to stretch their thinking and stand on tiptoe to catch new ideas. Many of them can learn to feel as did the girl who when she was working hard on a project looked up and said, "Don't you just love to feel your brain cells crackle?"

Watts, of England, has remarked that where textbooks are widely used it is difficult to detect lack of understanding. The material of the content subjects cannot be left, "in the twilight" of partial understanding. It must be brought out in to the sunlight of discussion and guided thinking and response so that children can safely and confidently incorporate it into themselves and add it as one more firm stone to the foundation they are building for later learning and experience.

Of course, reading in the social studies is not all done in textbooks.

¹Fay, Leo. "What Research Has to Say About Reading in the Content Areas," *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 8, No. 2, December 1954, pp. 68-72.

Reading about people and the way they solve their problems helps children to understand problems on the larger scale of community, nation, and world. Children need to learn how dangerous words can be when they are used thoughtlessly. They can understand the point of Eleanor Estes, *The Hundred Dresses* when the teacher reads it to them. Through reading children learn how people feel under unhappy and frustrating circumstances and how kind and thoughtful words can soothe hurt feelings and repair damaged relationships. Today's young people need to understand the values that underlie family and group life in our culture. Attitudes toward people and their institutions and ways of life are shaped through reading and discussion. Whether the stories deal with Andrewshek and his Auntie Katushka in *Poppy Seed Cakes* or with Pa and the children in *Little House on the Prairie* or with Jody and his father in *The Yearling* the basic values are there to be recognized and appreciated.

Reading of science material and arithmetic problems helps children to analyze, to think and use words precisely, and to understand cause and effect relationships. Language is used cautiously and with exactness in the sciences and children can learn through their reading to sense the difference between its use in these areas and in areas in which creative imagination need not be checked or limited by demonstrable fact.

Listening has come to be thought of as one of the language arts. Perhaps

this is as good a point as any to mention the contribution of poetry to growth in language. One finds little poetry in today's readers because it is far more difficult to read than prose and because children need to hear it before they can read it. Listening to poetry makes it possible for children to read it with appreciation and comprehension. Having heard it, they can now see how the thought is carried from line to line as one reads it. At first, when the teacher has read a poem the children will take up the book and read that poem again for themselves but do little with the other poems in the book. After they have listened to and enjoyed many poems they can read other poems independently.

Choral reading has value both for appreciation and for oral reading. As children listen to a poem and think its meaning they can also listen for rhythm and sound patterns and catch overtones of sound and meaning. The experience of listening, thinking, and reproducing helps them to improve their oral reading and also helps them to carry over some of the patterns into their own speech.

Oral reading and talk that grows out of the reading helps children to be aware of new words and new meanings. It tunes their ears to correctness in grammatical form and to well-constructed sentences so that they can gradually build their ideas and words into similar patterns.

Listening also tunes the ear to words which express feeling and stimulate reaction. Many children and youth (even adults) do not know

what to expect in response to their words—they cannot anticipate or predict reaction. Reading and listening linked with thought and feeling, help them build sensitivity to overtones and indicators of all sorts so that they can learn to use language to gain the results they are seeking.

The clarity of the speech one listens to influences the clarity of his own speech. Through listening to good oral reading young people can improve their own voices and the preciseness of their articulation and enunciation. Listening to words correctly pronounced helps them to correct errors in their own pronunciation.

For many children listening to material read aloud does more for the quality of their own inner reading than anything else. Listening enriches the reading through sharpening interest and through setting good patterns for integrating material. Contrary to the ideas one finds expressed now and then, reading is not stringing sounds together nor even saying words in sequence—it is putting meaning into words, integrating the words into larger meaningful units and putting the elements of meaning into whatever balance and perspective is called for by the author. It is the reader who brings printed pages to life and meaning. The words he reads guide and pattern his responses. New information and new insights may result—but the stuff out of which these *new* awarenesses are formed is after all only the fund of already acquired knowledge, sensitivity, and experience the individual reader brings to the

printed page. Listening to good reading helps children immeasurably with the integrating of their own reading.

Next, we might look at the relationships from the point of view of speech. To speak with ease, words must flow smoothly and effortlessly from one's tongue. Once an individual has mastered the mechanics of reading and has learned to blend meanings together into clear thought units, reading begins to improve his speech. The more he reads, the easier and more fluently his thoughts organize themselves into word and sentence patterns. The more he reads, the more confident he tends to become that he can put forth meaning that will be understood and accepted.

Clarity is of great importance in speech as it is in writing. An adequate supply of concepts and ideas gleaned from thoughtful reading together with an adequate supply of words that the individual can bring forth smoothly and easily make his oral contributions clear and meaningful.

Through reading, young people learn what forms of speech are suitable for various purposes. To amuse, one must be a good recounter of anecdotes. To interest, one must have his information in hand and express it clearly and with economy of words. To persuade, he must use words tactfully and with sensitivity to the feelings and reactions of his listener. And so it goes. Reading provides models, patterns, guides to follow in talking. Talking calls for ideas which frequently come from reading. Silent reading of material that is of interest leads to

intense concentration—the kind of concentration needed for a meeting of minds in conversation and discussion.

Writing, another of the language arts for which the school is responsible, follows on the heels of reading. Modern schools tend to let reading get a good start before much emphasis is placed upon writing. Reading is recognizing and reacting to patterns of symbols all assembled before one's eyes. Writing calls for selecting from among the twenty-six symbols that make up our borrowed Latin alphabet and arranging these in correct sequence to form words and sentences. Once the basic skills of handwriting and spelling are successfully achieved, writing becomes a matter of composing and reproducing content. The content of writing may come, of course, from individual experience but as time goes on more and more of it is influenced by reading. Children and young people rely on reading for both content and form. Self-help materials such as dictionaries, style sheets, handbooks of style, and language textbooks are used as reference and resource. Reading one's material for content and for form are part of the process of polishing after one has captured his basic ideas in a first draft.

Inspiration and ideas for creative writing frequently spring from reading. Children learn to take note of good beginnings which catch and hold interest in a story, good endings which finish it off neatly and satisfactorily and good methods of building up plot, suspense, and mystery.

Ease in writing comes not only

with skill in handling the tools of writing—spelling and handwriting—but also with a plentiful supply of material to write and knowledge of how to make ideas flow from one's pen in clear and correct form. Children learn form for their writing from their experience with reading. Teachers send children to reading materials of all kinds to check on form as well as content.

Individuals of all ages can learn what good writing is from reading good writing—appreciating it, enjoying it—and occasionally but *only* occasionally analyzing it. More mature young people may become deeply interested in analysis but not children.

The task of basic education is to help each child and youth to build himself. Language is an intimate and significant part of that self. All of the language arts help to shape the ideals, the standards and the values that are incorporated into the self. Young people need help to think of the language arts as areas in which they never achieve full maturity but are forever maturing, forever reaching out for higher standards, finer values and richer experiences.

• • •

From page 43.

the individual child, whether his primary need be remedial instruction or other therapy. The task remaining for the teacher, then, is the challenging one of providing the kind of emotional climate and learning environment which will be conducive to optimal learning, not only by retarded readers, but by all pupils.

WHAT RESEARCH SAYS TO THE TEACHER OF READING

RUTH H. SOLOMON
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Personality and Reading

RESEARCH in the field of reading has focused increasing attention on the effect of personal adjustment on reading achievement. Disagreement in the controversy over cause and effect relationships persists. While some investigators consider the emotional maladjustments to have produced the reading difficulty, others claim that the disturbed behavior of the child is a result of the frustration, tensions, and conflicts associated with his failure in reading. Remedial specialists as well as classroom teachers observe that frequently personality disturbances accompany reading disability, and at times therapy must precede remediation.

In a penetrating summary and interpretation of research concerning personality and reading, Robinson¹ suggests that the continuing disagreement may be attributed to three general causes: "first, different concepts of what constitutes reading may be held; second, divergent theories of learning place different emphases on the role of personal adjustment in learning to read; and finally, divergent theories of personality stress varying parameters, appraised and interpreted in different ways."² There is need,

thus, for continuing investigation which will be organized to take into account these varying theories and approaches.

More immediately and directly meaningful for the classroom teacher, perhaps, are studies of the effects of various therapeutic programs.

Redmount³ reported a 24-hour-a-day program carried on for a period of six weeks for a group of 24 retarded readers ranging in age from 8 to 18 years. A program of activities was provided which centered around the child's interests. Reading activities were brought into the situation as they contributed to pursuit of a particular activity. For example, if a child had interest in making model airplanes, he would be encouraged to extend that interest. The need to understand and follow directions provided motivation and opportunity for reading. A teacher was assigned to each pupil. Approximately four hours each day, divided between morning and afternoon periods, was allotted to these activities, with the rest of the day spent in various recreational pursuits. A half hour each day was used for play therapy or individual counseling, depending on the age of the child. Results were judged on the basis of personality de-

¹Helen M. Robinson, "Personality and Reading," *Modern Educational Problems: Report of the Seventeenth Educational Conference*, 1952. American Council on Education.

²*Ibid.*, p. 98.

³Robert S. Redmount, "Description and Evaluation of a Corrective Program for Reading Disability," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 39 (October, 1948), 347-358.

velopment, as measured by the Rorschach, and reading improvement shown on standardized tests given before and after the six-weeks period.

Although 67 per cent of the children revealed severe maladjustment, 39 per cent showed varying degrees of personality improvement and 48 per cent showed improvement in reading test scores. Although the older children (16-18 years) were most maladjusted and least improved personally, they tended to show greater reading improvement than the others. A control group, matched for age, IQ, and reading disability, did not reveal similar changes.

A unique feature of this experiment was the use of the Rorschach test with the teachers to study the association between teacher personality and child improvement. It is significant that the children assigned to the teachers who revealed varying degrees of poor adjustment usually failed to show improvement in personality or reading test results, while this was not true of most children assigned to the better adjusted teachers.

It is clear that a completely controlled program of this kind cannot be provided for every retarded reader. However, an experiment such as this does have important implications for the classroom teacher. The findings suggest that an approach to reading through the interests and activities of the pupils provides the essential ingredient of personal motivation without which learning is not likely to occur. It is evident, also, that severely maladjusted pupils are less likely to profit, even with the complete and individual

attention of the teacher. Such children should be identified early and referred for appropriate therapy, in order that their energies may be freed for learning. The personal adjustment of the teacher, too, is an important influence on the extent to which children learn.

With the hypothesis that the psychotherapeutic relationship with the teacher or tutor, in addition to the improvement of reading techniques, is a major factor in the correction of reading disability, Fisher¹ set up a controlled experiment. Twelve boys, residents of an institution for delinquent boys, were matched for age, IQ, and reading ability with a comparable group. All were more than three years retarded in reading, had the same regular classroom teacher, and received remedial reading instruction three hours each week from the same remedial teacher. The experimental group had, in addition, one non-directive therapy meeting each week. Retesting after six months showed greater progress for the group which had therapy in addition to the remedial reading instruction. Fisher concluded that his hypothesis was confirmed for these subjects, and that the psychotherapeutic relationship was an important factor in the correction of the reading disabilities.

Bills² also utilized non-directive therapy with retarded readers in two studies using the same technique.

¹Bernard Fisher, "Group Trepay with Retarded Readers," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 44 (October, 1953), 354-60.

²a. Robert E. Bills, "Nondirective Play Therapy with Retarded Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 14 (April, 1950), 140-149.

b. Robert E. Bills, "Play Therapy with Well Adjusted Retarded Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 14 (August, 1950), 246-249.

Eight third-grade children, retarded in reading, were tested and observed for thirty days as a control, given play therapy for thirty days, retested at the end of the experimental period and again after a thirty-day lapse to evaluate the permanence of any change. The subjects in one experiment made satisfactory personal adjustment, while those in the other were poorly adjusted. No remedial reading instruction was given. Test results showed significant increases in reading achievement with play therapy for the poorly adjusted retarded readers, but not for those who were well adjusted. The poorly adjusted children continued to make gains in reading during the third period, when play therapy was not given.

The results of this study also reveal the influence of the therapeutic relationship on learning. Especially significant is the difference in results for the two groups. It is evident that careful investigation of the extent of personal maladjustment is essential, in order that appropriate developmental, remedial, or therapeutic programs may be planned.

While precise relationships between personality and reading have not been established, and there is need for carefully planned research to clarify the issues, the classroom teacher is confronted with immediate problems. She is able to identify the retarded reader, and through careful observation and study of his behavior and available data may also determine some of the factors related to his difficulty. Appropriate procedures can be planned for

Please turn to page 40.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH NEW YORK CITY

Friday Morning, November 25th

Topic: "What About Reading in the Junior and Senior High School?"

Chairman: Dr. Nancy Larrick, Education Director, Random House Children's Books

9:15 - 10:25

PLANNING FOR READING IN THE TOTAL PROGRAM

Speaker: Dr. Nila B. Smith, Director, Reading Institute, New York University

Panel:

Dr. Margaret A. Nolan, Supervisor of English, High School Division, New York City Board of Education

Mr. Crosby E. Redman, Head of English Dept., Great Neck High School, Great Neck, New York

Miss Alice Robinson, Director of School Libraries, Montgomery County, Maryland

10:30 - 12:00

THE PROBLEM OF THE POOR READER

Speaker: Dr. Marvin Glock, Professor of Education, Cornell University

Panel:

Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Director Betts Reading Clinic, Haverford, Pennsylvania

Mr. H. Alan Robinson, Reading Specialist, Memorial Junior High School, Valley Stream, N. Y.

Miss Regina Heavey, Reading Specialist, Philadelphia Public Schools

Mrs. Judith Marcus, Librarian, William Penn High School, Philadelphia, Pa.

*See convention program for
place of meeting.*

*Announcing . . . a new and improved language arts
spelling program for Grades 1 through 3*

Reading Road to Spelling

- Features a new and more natural way of teaching spelling by the Word-Group Method . . . with all words grouped according to ease and effectiveness of teaching and learning
- Develops understanding and use of words in story context
- Teaches pupils how to use the correct forms of capitalization and punctuation
- Teaches spelling through specially-developed tactile and kinesthetic methods
- Provides abundant review, reteaching, and testing activities in spelling and related language-usage skills
- Contains a complete guidebook program for each grade.

Write for complete details

EVANSTON
ILLINOIS

Row, Peterson and Company

WHITE PLAINS
NEW YORK

Announcing



the publication on January 2, 1956 of a better method of teaching our children to read • • a new PHONICS series • • by a company that has been a leader in the phonics field for nearly half a century • • In colorful modern format this completely new series presents for the first time an ingenious system built on the common sense, basic method of letter sounds and blending by which the child naturally, easily, and rapidly acquires competence and facility in reading.

IROQUOIS PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.

P.O. Box 1315, Syracuse 1, New York

WHAT OTHER MAGAZINES ARE SAYING ABOUT THE TEACHING OF READING

MURIEL POTTER LANGMAN

MICHIGAN STATE NORMAL COLLEGE

"Reading The Comics: A Summary of Studies and an Evaluation, III," Paul A. Witty and Robert A. Sizemore, *Elementary English*, February, 1955.

Studies comparing the reading tastes of delinquents, and the adjustment of comics readers with children who do not read comics have found little difference in adjustment between the two groups.

The content of comic books, as analyzed by Malter, was found to be equal parts of humor and crime, about one-third each, with the other categories such as detective, jungle, and adventure, making up the remainder.

This final article of the series concludes with a plea to help children form their concepts of desirable behavior through teaching them to discriminate between the good and undesirable in comics as well as in other reading.

An extensive bibliography follows this article.

"Are Comics Better or Worse?" Jesse L. Murrell, D. D. *Parents*, August 1955.

This article presents the annual report of the Cincinnati Committee on Evaluation of Comic Books. Murrell, the chairman, notes both favorable and unfavorable changes in com-

ics content during the past year, and presents the Committee's lists under the headings, *No Objection*, *Some Objection* and *Objectionable*, with definitions of these terms, and some statistics. The standards for evaluation by the Committee are set forth. Information is present on laws and ordinances about comics. Copies of the Committee's list are available in quantity at nominal cost.

"Continuing a Remedial Reading Program." D. Lewis Edwards. *Elementary English*, April 1955.

"Suggested Materials for the Administration of a Public School Remedial Reading Program." D. Lewis Edwards. *Elementary English*, May 1955.

These are the second and third articles of a series discussing the establishment and operation of such a program. The second article presents a step by step procedure for setting up the goals and handling the problems. Planning and execution are clearly described. Suggestions are given for working with the teachers in the system on both improvement of the general level of reading instruction and cooperation with the remedial program. A concurrent public relations program, directed toward informing parents of children's progress, maintaining good rapport between parents

and teachers, and keeping the community aware of the aims and effectiveness of the program, is described. The problem of maintaining continuity over the summer vacation is discussed.

The third article presents forms developed by Edwards in the course of his work in the program he describes. Questionnaires for the parents of the poor reader, progress reports, referral blanks, outlines for notices to parents and teachers, and a diagnostic summary sheet are among the useful forms given. Since such blanks require time and experience in working out, Edwards has generously offered his own material for general use.

"For Children Who Have Reading Problems." Walter B. Barbe. *Elementary English*, February 1955

Reading Clinics. Directory. Compiled by Walter B. Barbe. *Junior League Reading Center, University of Chattanooga*. No date.

Barbe describes the establishment and operation of this clinic, which he directs. He stresses cooperation between classroom teachers and the center. The Directory lists reading clinics by states and cities, lists staff, case load and fees, and the names of organizations sponsoring each clinic.

"Parents Help with Reading." E. W. Dolch. *Elementary English*, March 1955.

This article points out that although they are relatively few, there are some occasions when teachers may wish parents to help children with their

PAUL WITTY
AND OTHERS

Reading for Interest

1955 Edition



A handsome new edition of this well-known basal reading series for the first six grades.

Reading Roundup

WITTY — PETERSON — PARKER — WELSH

A selection of fiction, non-fiction, plays, and poetry, from American and British sources. Books 1, 2, 3, for grades 7, 8, and 9. (Book 3 in preparation.)

**D. C. HEATH
AND COMPANY**

Publishers of better books for better teaching

Home Office: Boston 16

Sales Offices: New York 14

Chicago 16

San Francisco 5

Atlanta 3

Dallas 1

reading. He discusses the following points of emphasis: the selection of materials for children's reading; the use of games in teaching; methods for parents to avoid in teaching, e.g., spelling and overemphasis or overdoses of phonics; preparation of parents for the irregularity of progress, the ups and downs, with special admonitions against impatience and scolding.

"Vocabulary Study by Fields of Interest." E. W. Dolch. *Elementary English*, May 1955.

Dolch suggests that the vocabulary of each age or grade be studied in fields of interest, thus enabling the investigators to examine depth of meaning (the number of meanings known for each word) as well as to

compile a list of words in each field. He presents an introduction to his own research by listing 305 single word topics each of which represents not more than 100 words in an interest field. The topics fall under the general headings School, Everyday Life, Adult Life, the Arts, the Physical Sciences, the Biological Sciences, the Social Sciences, Special Aspects of the Environment, General Vocabulary concerning Persons, and General Vocabulary.

"Effect of Age of Entrance into Grade 1 upon Achievement in Elementary School." Inez B. King. *Elementary School Journal*, February 1955.

This article is reported here because of its obvious relationship to the question of maturity and learning to read

UNSOLVED PROBLEMS IN READING

A symposium on reading problems and needed efforts at solution. Written by such eminent authorities in the field of reading as Emmett Betts, E. W. Dolch, Arthur I. Gates, W. S. Gray, A. J. Harris, D. H. Russell, Ruth Strang, Paul Witty, and G. A. Yoakam. Useful bibliographies included. Thirty-five pages. Reprinted from *Elementary English*, October and November, 1954. \$.60 per copy. Order Stock No. R-2

LANGUAGE ARTS FOR TODAY'S CHILDREN

Volume II in the NCTE Curriculum Series, published in September, 1954. Sets up definite plans for an elementary language arts curriculum. Part I discusses the relationship of language to child development. Listening, speaking, writing, and reading are treated in Part II. Part III describes broad units interrelating all four of the language arts, and Part IV characterizes a good language arts program. This book has been proclaimed as the best in its field by many of America's foremost language arts educators. 431 pages. \$3.75 per copy (special price to members of NCTE). Order Stock No. M27-11

To order either or both of these teaching aids, or to obtain information about membership in NCTE, or to obtain a catalogue of NCTE's publications, write:

DEPARTMENT RT
National Council of Teachers of English
704 South Sixth Street
Champaign, Illinois

ATTRACTIVE BOOKS

ENRICHMENT READERS

WORKBOOKS

TEACHERS' MANUALS

CHART

PICTURE, WORD, SENTENCE, AND PHRASE CARDS

RECORDS

TESTS

GINN BASIC READERS

the choice of thousands of teachers, assure continuous growth. The series gives facility in reading through a complete program of word analysis, comprehension, and study skills. It fosters literary appreciation, makes reading part of the total language-arts program, and provides for evaluation and individualization.

GINN AND COMPANY

Home Office: Boston

Chicago 16

Columbus 16

Sales Offices: New York 11

Atlanta 3

San Francisco 3

Dallas 1

Toronto 7

GLOBE BOOKS FOR BETTER READING

Readable Classics

CooperTHE DEERSLAYER
DickensNICHOLAS NICKLEBY
DanaTWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST
Verne20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA
HaggardKING SOLOMON'S MINES
and ALLAN QUATERMAIN
WellsWAR OF THE WORLDS and
THE TIME MACHINE

Reading Skills

FeigenbaumEFFECTIVE READING
Gainsburg and Spector....BETTER READING
RobbinsWORD STUDY FOR
IMPROVED READING

Functional English

DrachmanMAKING FRIENDS
WITH WORDS
Jochen and Shapiro....VOCATIONAL ENGLISH (Books I and II)
Carlin and Christ....ENGLISH ON THE JOB
(Revised)

Modern Literature

ShellabargerCAPTAIN FROM CASTLE
ForesterCAPTAIN HORATIO HORNBLOWER
SperLIVING AMERICAN PLAYS
LandonANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM

For a complete catalog of Globe publications or examination copies of books, returnable without obligation, write to

GLOBE BOOK COMPANY

175 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

in Grade 1. The subjects were two groups entering first grade — at the same time in the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Public Schools, one group of 54 children between five years, eight months and five years, eleven months at entrance to first grade; the other a group of 50 children between six years, five months and six years, eight months of age. Only children with I.Q.'s between 90 and 110 were included in the study with the mean I.Q. slightly higher for the younger group. The mean age difference between the groups was nine months. The study used data from the cumulative record folders of the children from Grade I through Grade VI, and the areas examined were achievement, attendance, retentions and personal and social adjustment.

In summarizing her findings, the investigator says that "the majority of the children who entered Grade I before the chronological age of six years did not realize their optimum academic achievement" at the end of six years of school, while a large per cent of the older group "realized their potential in respect to academic achievement, and many of them over-achieved." The mean difference in achievement between the groups was slightly over one year and four months.

With regard to retentions, only one child who entered Grade I after six years of age was retained, while ten of the younger group were retained. More boys than girls were retained.

The average attendance in days was 17.6 days more for the older group.

With regard to adjustment, the

younger group required more special help from the guidance department. These children suffered from more speech defects, nervous habits and personal and social maladjustment.

"Developmental Interrelationships among Language Variables in Children of the First Grade." Clyde Martin. *Elementary English*, March 1955.

This study, from Texas schools, measured children's development and achievement at the end of the first, second, and fifth years in school. Among the variables were several aspects of oral language, achievement and handwriting scores, drawing scores, and scores on a motor test.

Among the results of the study are the following:

No relationship was found between fine motor skill and the language skills (reading readiness, reading achievement and oral language), but a substantial relationship was found to exist between fine motor ability and writing. The investigator believes this supports the general observation that children can learn to speak and read well without learning to write. Many children enter school without the motor skill requisite for writing, and probably writing instruction should be postponed in such cases until sufficient maturity in motor skill has developed to make learning to write easy and rapid. Ability to draw showed no relationship to oral language, but "in a small, definite way" it was found to be related to readiness to read, to reading achievement, to writing, and to fine motor ability.

The investigator, in her summary,

New!

MODERN ADVENTURE STORIES

Three books of mystery and suspense that put reading enjoyment in high gear.

THE STRANGE PAPER CLUE

THE MAN WITH THE POINTED BEARD

FIND FORMULA X-48!

Stories of mature interest level and low readability level for intermediate grades and junior-senior high school. Exciting tales that slow readers, as well as mature readers, can enjoy and understand.

For full details write to:

EVANSTON
ILLINOIS

Row, Peterson and Company

WHITE PLAINS
NEW YORK

concludes that language variables follow an individual pattern of development for each child, and "there was little indication that the first grader who talked well would succeed in reading, or that the poor speaker would have difficulty in it."

"Some Field Observations on Early Grade Progress in Reading." Earl K. Stock. *Elementary School Journal*, May 1955.

The writer urges that the full-scale readiness program be used with discretion. Some rapid learners become bored and lose their impetus toward learning to read if actual beginning reading instruction is delayed in favor of four to eight weeks of the type of routine readiness activities prescribed by basal reading series.

Stock also warns against prolonged review after summer vacations for the rapid learner. He points out that these children usually gain skill, not lose it, during the summer, because they practice reading activities, and they should start the school year with challenging material rather than with review.

He then points out the very different needs of the slow-learning child, for whom the same four to eight weeks of routine readiness activities may not be sufficient. For him formal activities are frequently introduced too early and books too soon. He emphasizes that the pace of teaching must be suited to the needs of the children, and that better instruction results in widening the differences in reading level between rapid and slow learners.

INTERESTING BOOKS FOR THE READING TEACHER

BERTHA B. FRIEDMAN
QUEENS COLLEGE

COMMISSION OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH—LANGUAGE ARTS FOR TODAY'S CHILDREN.
NEW YORK: APPLETON-CENTURY-CROFTS, INC., 1954.

This latest publication of the National Council of Teachers of English concerns itself with the program of the elementary school. It was presented at their meeting in Detroit in November, 1954, and was received with great enthusiasm. The thesis of *Language Arts for Today's Children* is that the child's growth in language power is related to the total pattern of his growth. Part I elaborates this thesis and discusses the relationships between child development and language development. Part II, the most comprehensive section of the book, deals with the four facets of the language arts—listening, speaking, reading, writing—and the development of skill in these areas as arts in themselves and also as tools for other learning. Descriptive illustrations contributed by teachers from wide areas of the United States point up "how to do" the language arts teaching task in the classroom. While we are all aware that not every school situation is wholly receptive to all such activities, nevertheless most situations have the possibility of being improved by the incorporation of some of the suggested practices.

An excellent chapter in speech development reiterates the need for a social climate conducive to relaxed satisfactory intercommunication. While the importance of referring serious speech problems to a specialist is stressed, helpful suggestions for the improvement of simple defects are included. Readiness in reading at every level is emphasized. Perhaps there are too many references to specific books. However, these can

be used as reference lists by teachers to help them meet the needs of their own groups. The development of study skills and the recognition and guidance of retardation are also discussed. Since the authors see reading as pervasive in the whole school program, they suggest that with reference to reading evaluation "the whole school staff look at the reading program and that all evidences of growth in reading be sought, not only the results of standard tests." The same viewpoint shows itself in the discussion on writing. Writing with a purpose is recommended rather than "practice periods" in writing. Whole pages are devoted to examples of children's own creative writing.

The assessment of the fundamental processes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in Parts I and II is followed up in Part III by a unification of all of these skills into a comprehensive program of the school day. Descriptions are given of activities in a kindergarten extending over a year. Appropriate projects for other grades are skillfully reported—all excellent examples of the development of language power in functional settings for children living in a democracy.

Going beyond the single classroom projects, Part IV deals with the program as it involves the whole school. The importance of sequential development, of the classroom environment, of flexible seating, of physical equipment, and of the availability of reading materials is discussed thoroughly and helpfully. The chapter on the effective way that home

The McKee Reading Series

Through genuinely interesting reading matter, children are taught not only to read well and independently, but also to demand meaning from all their reading, and to look upon reading as an interesting and enjoyable experience. In addition, there is a *built-in* phonetic program which gives the pupil a firm foundation for developing reading power, and the ability to read a wide variety of worthwhile material effectively.

An Outstanding Basal Language Arts Program

Building Spelling Power . . .

HANNA—HANNA

Recent research on the consistency of phonetic principles leads to the sensible, fresh approach of this new basal series. Children learn phonemes in the order of their regularity and concentrate on those words and their parts which are irregular. The result is greater spelling power through skillfully designed exercises and a practical day-by-day instructional program.

GRADES 2 - 6

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

Boston
Chicago
Atlanta

New York
Dallas
Palo Alto

The McKee Language Series

Teaches the pupil to meet more successfully the important language requirements of everyday life. • Taking part in discussions and conversations • Making reports • Writing letters • Making descriptions • Telling stories • Telephoning • Giving directions and explanations • Giving reviews • Writing creatively

and school can cooperate in promoting language growth is suggestive and operational. It poses a real challenge to teachers and administrators.

A concluding chapter on the evaluation of the language arts tells us that "a well-balanced program of evaluation involves a study of the personal and social development of the child, his habits of work, his reading interests, his growth in language power, and his improvement in specific skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening as revealed in the use he makes of these skills for daily purposes of social and business communication."

To sum up, both a sound background of theory and a concrete treatment of ways and means are included. The concept of the developmental process of the language arts program from early school readiness to the hoped for literacy of the adolescent is consistently carried through without over-simplification or loss of perspective. The volume is replete with examples from elementary schools, including more than fifty photographs of children in experiences relating to the language arts. It should prove to be a most useful reference for teacher education students as well as for teachers, supervisors, and administrators, and concerned parents.

*Helen R. Zajt
Assistant Principal
Detroit Public Schools*

Elizabeth A. Simpson. *Helping High School Students Read Better*, Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1954.

The reading program proposed by Elizabeth A. Simpson is designed to help high school teachers of the various subject-matter areas contribute to the betterment of the reading habits of all their students.

Even a superficial observation of the reading practices of high school students points to the need for training in reading. In recent years, concern about reading has resulted in special work with

non-readers, retarded readers, and reluctant readers. Important as these efforts are, work in these areas needs to be supplemented by a reading program geared to the needs of "all" students during their adolescent years. Better school work, proper preparation for college, adequate preparation for jobs, and the achievement of greater personal and social adjustment require the meeting of young people's reading needs at the time that they are receiving their high school training. It is with this purpose that the author has developed the flexible reading improvement program which she recommends for all high school students.

Underlying her proposed program is the belief that it is possible for every high school teacher to help students:

- Develop reading readiness
- Read to get the main idea
- Read to get important details
- Read to answer a specific question
- Read to evaluate
- Apply what is read
- Develop vocabulary
- Outline and summarize what is read
- Read for implications
- Increase reading rate

The author describes the nature of each of these skills and suggests specifically how subject-matter teachers (including, but not only, English teachers) can build or strengthen these and other important reading abilities through a systematized reading program. Many definite suggestions are offered as to how to help students read textbooks and other essential materials.

The author strongly urges that, whenever possible, a reading coordinator be appointed and a "reading center" (as distinguished from a "reading clinic") be established. A "reading center" is designed to attract and help students at all reading levels and not only those who are considered retarded.

The author presents a table, with supplementary explanation, describing a general organizational plan for the read-

ing improvement program; and another table, also with supplementary explanation, describing day by day plans for 18-week courses for the various reading improvement sections. In the carrying out of this program, it is strongly recommended that students be grouped according to their reading needs. There follows a rather detailed explanation of the choice and use of standardized reading tests for the purpose of organizing students according to their reading needs. Although the author proposes that teachers employ a combination of large group (entire class), small group, and individual techniques of reading instruction, she tends to concentrate almost entirely on suggestions for forming and teaching groups referred to as reading-ability sections. As a matter of fact, the author seems to rely almost completely upon the results of standardized tests in grouping students for reading training.

And yet, in actual situations, one would expect it to be necessary to re-group students fairly continuously if the reading program is to be genuinely effective. Surely students would frequently find themselves "out of their reading level" even though they had advisedly been assigned to particular reading groups somewhat earlier. Though the rigidity of a high school program may not permit continuous re-scheduling of classes, the nature of the reading program should, it would seem, permit and actually encourage continuous shifting of groups within each reading section. Help is needed in this area. However, little if any genuine guidance is offered the teacher in applying cautious subjective judgment of student progress and individualized diagnostic testing for the purpose of changing the make-up of small reading groups as the need arises.

Though specific procedures for the development of the proposed program may vary from school to school, the individual reading program must, in every case, evolve democratically. Stim-

ulating interest in initiating the program, and being guided by representative committees in the development of the program are important factors. The actual program must be an outgrowth of free and full staff participation in order that all involved may work together harmoniously and productively. It is of major importance that each teacher's necessary freedom be preserved. The extent to which and the speed with which such a program can be developed will vary from school to school. School principals are to help but are not to determine completely the nature and organization of the reading program. It is also recommended that teachers receive in-service training as the program develops. Many definite procedures in introducing the program with minimum expense and maximum effectiveness are offered.

The book ends with eight descriptions of programs revealing various ways of introducing and developing reading improvement programs on the high school level.

It is somewhat surprising, in this day in which so many educators are beginning to recognize the importance of meeting emotional needs, that the author seems to overlook the influence of emotional factors in relation to reading achievement. Consideration should be given to the nature and treatment of emotional blocks which affect reading behavior, it seems safe to say, by all who would help adolescents grow.

The contribution made by the author is not so much an original one as a practical one. Her volume should lend courage and genuine help to many teachers whose educational values may be sound but whose knowledge, skills, or courage in the area of reading teaching are, as yet, not sufficiently developed. The book should serve teachers individually and as groups in meeting today's serious educational problem of helping young people improve reading habits while they

Please turn to page 23.

AND STILL WE GROW!

The steady growth and progress made by I.C.I.R.I. in the past indicate that it should become one of the most influential educational organizations of the future. All of us can glow with pride at being members of this organization. Each member in his own area can continue to encourage memberships and formation of new councils.

As a review for old members and information for new members, may I summarize the work of last year.

1. *Financial Situation*

If you refer to the annual report of 1952 you will see that the problem of financial support was one of great concern. Today we are happy to state that there has been great improvement in our financial status. The auditor's statement of December 1954 that the records were in good order and that the excess over disbursements for 1954 was \$1,301.47, is one we received with pride. Today the balance is even much larger. The budget committee has a carefully prepared budget for our guidance for the coming year in anticipation of an increased membership.

2. *Membership and Local Councils*

Our membership in 1952 was 1,376; today it is nearly 6,000. The number of councils was less than 10; today there are almost 70. This year I attended five meetings in Ontario promoting the work of I.C.I.R.I. and the organization chairman, Dr. Sheldon, attended more than one hundred meetings in the U.S.A. Other officers and members have been speakers for various council meetings throughout

Ontario and the U.S.A. (The most time-consuming duty of the president this year has been an amazing amount of correspondence but this has been a heavy task, also, for both the program and organization chairman.)

3. *Publication*

It was in 1952 that, with some trepidation but great courage, we first started to print THE READING TEACHER which, under the able editorship of Dr. Larrick, gained wide recognition. It was thought that if the magazine were printed with an attractive cover and contained more helpful articles for teachers, both subscriptions and membership would increase. That optimism has been justified. Today, under the editorship of competent Dr. Figurel, progress has continued. Our subscriptions total 6,000 and we have a magazine which we are proud to recommend to everyone interested in the field of reading. The themes of the four issues this year were well received and were as follows: Improving Basal Reading Instruction, Improving Reading in the Content Areas, Developmental Reading at the High School and College Level, Controversial Issues in the Teaching of Reading. Similar helpful themes have been selected for next year with the main purpose, again, of aiding classroom teachers.

4. *Open Meetings*

In 1952 the promotion of the objectives of I.C.I.R.I. was carried on by means of (a) members (b) THE READING TEACHER and (c) local council meetings. Today we use another channel, viz., our Open Meetings. This year delegates and their

To Improve Reading Skills at *Any* Reading Level—

THE READER'S DIGEST DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM

READER'S DIGEST EDUCATIONAL EDITION

Winner of a Freedoms Foundation Award, 1954

The world's most widely read magazine, specially edited for students, NOW with 40 pages of student and teacher helps bound into each issue

Better Reading—24 pages of exercises and activities designed to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of students in junior and senior high school

Teaching Guide—16 pages packed with practical lesson plans, "Tests That Teach" and answer keys to exercises in **Better Reading**

AND, as another—and new—service

New Standard Vocabulary Test—two scientifically prepared companion tests to diagnose and measure your students' vocabulary level: FORM A in the October issue, FORM B in the May issue—free to users of the Educational Edition of Digest

SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL LIVING

A brand new series of six delightful, colorfully illustrated curriculum readers with inspiring real-life stories and articles from Reader's Digest, designed to build character values and communications skills, for use in grades 7-12

READER'S DIGEST READING SKILL BUILDER PROGRAM

Work-Type Readers with Articles Adapted from Reader's Digest

Reading Skill Builders—a series of eight illustrated work-type readers, Parts I and II, for 3rd-, 4th-, 5th- and 6th-grade reading levels

Reader's Digest Readings—two illustrated work-type readers for students of English as a second language and for use with slow and reluctant readers in 6th grade and above

Adult Education Readers—two lower-elementary level, illustrated work-type readers for mature persons learning to read

The Reader's Digest Educational Department

Arthur J. Crowley, Director

Pleasantville, New York

friends of A.A.S.A. were encouraged to attend open meetings at St. Louis and Cleveland to hear reading experts discuss three controversial issues:

1. Development of Word-Perception Skills
2. Basic Reading Instruction Beyond Primary Grades
3. Development of Reading Skills in Curriculum Areas

In Chicago, a joint meeting was held with A.S.C.D. on the three important topics, viz:

1. The Values of Reading in Meeting the Needs of Children and Youth
2. The Relation of Reading to Development in the Language Arts
3. Interrelations of Reading and Other Mass Media in Child Development

Today (May 7th) the fourth open meeting in Pittsburgh has followed largely the St. Louis and Cleveland plan. These meetings have been planned and organized under the experienced and skilled leadership of our president-elect, Dr. William S. Gray, who is recommending additional meetings with other organizations next year, e.g., N.C.S.S., N.C.T.E., and P.T.A., in addition to A.A.S.A. and A.S.C.D.

It is because we care about children and their progress, and because we believe that the ability of how to read and what to read answers a fundamental need, that all of us are promoting I.C.I.R.I. Our gratitude is given to the pioneering organizers, and hard-working officers and members of the

past, for helping to light the candle of I.C.I.R.I. which next year, under the watchfulness of our incomparable Dr. Gray, with the cooperation of the officers and members throughout these two nations, and elsewhere, will shed a stronger light.

"How far yon little candle throws its beam!"

It has been a privilege and honour to be president of this organization and I should like to express my deep appreciation of the cooperation received from the Board and Officers during this past year. I should like to thank our secretary-treasurer, Dr. Donald Cleland, the rock of our organization, for his unfailing and prompt assistance, for the excellence of his reports, and the innumerable duties he and his office performed so well; Dr. Gray, for his skill, genius, and patience in organizing Open Meetings despite many irritations and much correspondence; Dr. Figurel and his office for our flourishing magazine and his uncomplaining, persevering attitude in this tremendous task; Mr. H. Alan Robinson for the effective advertising in the magazine; Dr. Harris, our legal adviser, for the time and thought spent in working on the proposed merger of N.A.R.T. and I.C.I.R.I. and for his share in the thoughtful, careful study of by-laws for the new organization; Dr. Sheldon for his time and effort spent on demanding organizational work. I should like to thank especially our past president, Dr. Witty, for his guidance and continued strong support; our Directors, Dr. Emmett Betts, Dr. Ruth

HELP ALL YOUR STUDENTS TO READ BETTER

Use These SRA Reading Aids in elementary schools, high schools, colleges

books

How To Become A Better Reader

by DR. PAUL WITTY
Northwestern University

assists the individual to develop
the important reading abilities

SRA Better Reading Books (1, 2, 3)

by ELIZABETH A. SIMPSON
Illinois Institute of Technology

enables student to check week by week
growth in reading speed and comprehension

SRA Reading Progress Folder

for use with any of the above volumes

provides the student with a systematic,
up-to-date record of his reading gains

tests

Diagnostic Reading Tests: Survey Section

Forms A and B

measures rate of reading,
vocabulary and comprehension

SRA Reading Record

by GUY T. BUSWELL
University of California

measures ten reading skills and gives an
over-all reading comprehension score

devices

Reading Accelerator

a reading-pacing machine used to
increase reading rate and comprehension

Reading Calculator

a slide rule for rapid calculation of
speed settings on the *Reading Accelerator*

For more information about reading aids, reading-improvement programs:

- consult *Helping High School Students Read Better* by Elizabeth Simpson
- or write Department RK

SCIENCE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

57 West Grand Avenue Chicago 10, Illinois

Strang, Dr. Nancy Larrick, Dr. David Russell, Dr. Walter Barbe, Dr. LaVerne Strong and others for their practical assistance and encouragement.

Thank you, everyone, for your enthusiastic support. Here is to an even better year in 1956!

MARGARET A. ROBINSON
Past President

• • •

The President's Message

I wish first of all to express my keen appreciation of the honor which you have conferred upon me in electing me President of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction. I shall do my best throughout my term of office to maintain the high standards set by the preceding presidents and to promote in every way possible the growth and influence of ICIRI.

A review of the current situation indicates clearly that our activities during the current year may be directed to distinct advantage toward the achievement of the following major objectives:

1. To stimulate wide discussion throughout the year of vital issues relating to the teaching of reading for the purpose:

a. Of sensitizing the profession as a whole to the basic problems and controversial issues relating to reading which we face today.

b. Of promoting a growing understanding on the part of parents and the public in gen-

eral of the methods used today in teaching reading and the evidence or reasons that justify them.

2. To carry forward vigorous campaigns to establish local and regional councils and to extend membership in ICIRI. It seems reasonable to set a goal of 10,000 members by the end of the year.

3. To carry forward the normal activities of ICIRI with all the vigor possible while careful study is being made of the proposed new constitution by our own members as well as those of NART.

4. To effect the merger of the two organizations, if the proposed constitution is approved, in such a way as will enable ICIRI to fulfill its responsibilities to its members and to effect the transfer of its records and related routines as easily and effectively as possible.

I am glad to report that all new committee chairmen and members have been appointed, with but one exception, and that from an organizational point of view we are prepared for a year of vigorous action. The chairmen of regular committees are announced elsewhere in this issue of *THE READING TEACHER*.

Because of the increasing number of joint meetings in which ICIRI participates it has seemed advisable to appoint a committee on Local Arrangements. Its function is to make such arrangements where meetings are held as will insure appropriate facilities, wide publicity, and efficient administration of programs. Mrs. Elsie

Stahl, Assistant Principal, Public School 210, New York City, has accepted the chairmanship of this committee.

The members of her committee are: Dr. Nancy Young, Bureau of Curriculum Research, New York, New York, Miss Millicent Lippman, Assistant Superintendents' Office, New York, New York, and Dr. Eugene Schronk, Atlantic City School System, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Unfortunately, the constructive work which ICIRI does to promote better reading instruction has not been widely publicized. To correct this situation the Board of Directors at its last meeting authorized the appointment of a Publicity Committee. Its function is to develop and carry out plans for giving wide publicity through newspapers and magazines and over the radio and television to significant ICIRI activities, reports and conferences. Miss Eleanor M. Johnson, Wesleyan University, accepted the chairmanship but due to unfortunate circumstances has found it impossible to serve. She has agreed, however, to send a preview of the contents of *THE READING TEACHER* for the year to 10,000 supervisors on her mailing list. This is a splendid type of cooperation for which we express sincere thanks to Miss Johnson. Steps are under way to secure a chairman of this committee.

Without doubt the superior quality of the contents of *THE READING TEACHER* has done more than anything else to bring ICIRI to the favorable attention of administrators and

teachers. Your president has heard many comments recently concerning the timeliness, soundness and practical value of the articles published. Dr. J. Allen Figurel, editor, and the members of his Advisory Board have developed plans for the current year which promise to maintain and possibly to excel the high standards of the past. It is hoped that every member of ICIRI will bring *THE READING TEACHER* to the attention of administrators and teachers who are not already subscribers. This suggestion arises from the fact that the larger the number of subscribers the more ICIRI can invest in making this magazine of maximum value to teachers.

I wish to urge the officers of Local Councils to take steps at once to plan programs for the year that will provide members with needed help and stimulation. An inactive organization is of little value to its members. It becomes a dynamic force as it engages in activities that enlist the vigorous and enthusiastic cooperation of all members. Those councils which have developed interesting plans for the year should report them to the editor of *THE READING TEACHER* so that they can be broadcast in the column entitled "News of Local Councils."

More joint meetings with other organizations have been planned for this year than formerly. You will find announcements in this issue by Miss Nancy Larrick, Chairman of the Program Committee, of joint meetings in November with the National Council of Teachers of English and with the National Council of Social Studies.

Arrangements have been made for a joint meeting with AASA in February and with ASCD in March. Further details concerning these meetings will appear in the next issue of *THE READING TEACHER*.

Definite progress has been made during the last few months with respect to the merger of ICIRI and NART. At the annual meeting in May both the Board of Directors and the General Assembly of Representatives approved the proposed constitution. The chairman of the Merger Committee, Dr. Albert J. Harris, was authorized to take such steps in cooperation with the Merger Committee of NART as may be necessary from time to time to affect the merger. Furthermore, your President was authorized to cooperate with the President of NART in the appointment of a committee of five to nominate a slate of officers for distribution to members of both organizations in the form of a ballot as soon as the Board of Representatives of NART approves the proposed constitution. This matter will be considered by that Board at its annual meeting in New York City near the end of October. The Nominating Committee has been selected and letters mailed to them under the joint signature of the two Presidents. These letters were accompanied by a statement prepared by the two Merger Committees defining the duties of the Nominating Committee and setting October 15 as the date on which its work should be completed.

If the proposed constitution is approved by the Board of Representa-

tives of NART copies of the proposed constitution and the ballot for new officers will be sent early in November by the Merger Committees to all members of both organizations. It is sincerely hoped that the merger of the two organizations will be heartily approved by members of ICIRI. The history of this effort and the advantages of the proposed merger are summarized in the two paragraphs that follow. I am indebted to Dr. Harris, Chairman of the Merger Committee of ICIRI for their content.

"Since the Summer of 1953, the idea of merging the National Association for Remedial Teaching and ICIRI has been explored carefully and cautiously by both organizations. After favorable consideration of the merger idea by both Boards, a constitution for a new merged organization was drafted and approved by the Boards of both organizations. The details of how the merger can be most effectively carried out are now under consideration.

"The merger offers many attractive advantages and entails no serious disadvantages for either organization. The advantages can be summarized as follows: (1) There will be immediate gain in membership, since relatively few people at present belong to both organizations. (2) NART's strong regional and state groups and ICIRI's local councils supplement each other and, if merged, provide an effective organization at all levels. (3) Several strong independent regional groups have expressed an interest in affiliating with a unified international association, but will not join either of

Helping growing boys and girls
grow up in reading . . .



**THE NEW BASIC READERS
for Grades 4-6**

GRAY • MONROE • ARTLEY • ARBUTHNOT

All selections in The New Basic Reading Program have been chosen to help children expand their capacity to enjoy and appreciate good reading, to help them stretch their ability to read with ever increasing understanding—to help them grow up in reading. Interest in these good stories and in the unit themes around which they are centered makes it easy for you to lead your boys and girls into wide personal reading and important skill-building exercises.

Free on request: "Helping Middle-Graders Move Ahead in Reading," a 24-page booklet in full color, describing the new program and presenting a complete story and lesson plan. Ask for No. 455.

Middle-Grade Texts, each with Teacher's Edition and Think-and-Do Book

The New Times and Places (4/1) • More Times and Places (4/2)

The New Days and Deeds (5/1) • More Days and Deeds* (5/2)

The New People and Progress (6/1) • More People and Progress* (6/2)

*Ready in January 1956

CHICAGO • ATLANTA
DALLAS • PALO ALTO
NEW YORK

Scott, Foresman and Company

the present organizations. (4) NART has stressed regional programs and research, while ICIRI has placed its major strength in *THE READING TEACHER*; a strong unified organization will be able to carry on all the main activities of both present groups. (5) Overhead expenses will be cut by centralization of association business in one office, with a paid executive and clerical staff. (6) Those who now belong to both organizations will pay less in dues, while those who belong to one will receive more in publication and service for approximately the same dues. (7) The merger will make possible an increase in the number of pages of *THE READING TEACHER*, which will be the official organ of the merged association. (8) Competition for the volunteer services of leaders in the field of reading, as speakers, writers and Board members, will be eliminated."

WILLIAM S. GRAY

• • •

News of Local Councils

Local Councils are urged to send news of their meetings and plans for the future to Miss Josephine Tronsberg, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania, who is Local Council Editor.

• • •

At the second meeting of the San Francisco Bay Area Council, Dr. Frank N. Freeman, University of California, made a general presentation of the scientifically established principles of learning to read. His talk was followed by a panel discussion on how the schools can keep the public in-

formed of teaching methods used in reading instruction.

At the last meeting of the Arizona Council, new officers were elected following a panel discussion on "Unsolved Problems in the Teaching of Reading."

The Illinois State Normal University Reading Council heard a very instructive talk on children's library books by their librarian. Several members expressed the wish that the council become a "work-type" organization for the study and discussion of certain reading topics.

The Cabell Council, Huntington, West Virginia, which received its charter in May sent five of its members to the annual assembly of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction held at the University of Pittsburgh, May 7, 1955. The group consisted of a superintendent, a principal, a reading supervisor, an elementary school critic teacher, and a high school teacher. This coming year, the council hopes to have at least one outstanding open meeting and several discussion and workshop meetings.

The Oklahoma Council, Midwest City, Oklahoma, sponsored a two-day reading conference at Central State College in April. The theme of the conference was "Techniques for Improving Reading Instruction in the Classroom." The keynote speaker was Dr. Ralph Staiger, Mississippi Southern College, Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Demonstrations at the primary, the intermediate, and the secondary levels were given and evaluated, and ques-

**NATIONAL COUNCIL
FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES
NEW YORK CITY**

**Saturday, November 26th,
10:00 - 11:45 a.m.**

Topic: "Developing Skillful Readers in Elementary—School Social Studies"

Chairman: Dr. LaVerne Strong, Elementary Supervisor, Connecticut State Department of Education

Speakers:

"What Research Tells Us"—Dr. Gertrude Whipple, Supervisor of Language Education, Detroit Public Schools

"Developing Specialized Skills"—Dr. Leo Fay, Associate Professor of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington

Panel:

Mrs. Clara Malcolmson, Fifth-Grade Teacher, Kensington Elementary School, Great Neck, New York

Miss Charlotte DeHart, Principal, Virginia Avenue Elementary School, Winchester, Virginia

Miss Helen Perdue, Librarian, Bear Creek Elementary School, Baltimore County, Maryland

Dr. Albert J. Harris, Director, Reading Clinic, Queens College, N. Y.

**Saturday, November 26th
2:15 - 4:00 p.m.**

Topic: "Children's Books in the Teaching of Social Studies"

(An exhibit of children's books selected by the speaker and panel as pertinent to the discussion will be on display through the courtesy of the American Book Publishers Council.)

Chairman: Dr. Nancy Larrick, Education Director, Random House Children's Books

Speaker: Dr. Leland Jacobs, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University

Panel:

Dr. C. DeWitt Boney, Principal, Nassau Elementary School, East Orange, New Jersey

Miss Grace Shakin, Librarian, Lakeville Elementary School, Great Neck, New York

Mrs. Gladys Montgomery, Fourth Grade Teacher, Longfellow Elementary School, Jersey City, N. J.

Mrs. Beatrice Hurley, Associate Professor, School of Education, New York University

NOTE: Members must show their ICIRI membership cards to be admitted.

tions were answered. Clinical techniques were also included in the demonstrations. Two hundred and fifty people registered for the conference.

The Columbus Council held its first meeting of the school year on October 5, 1955. Two of the teachers gave a resume of the Reading Workshop Findings. This was followed by discussions on "Developmental Reading Work Sheets" and "Basic English, What It Is and What It Can Do for Reading". Later this month the Columbus Council and the Central Ohio Teachers Association have planned a joint sectional meeting on reading. Dr. William S. Gray, University of Chicago, will address the group on "The Development of Word Perception Skills." The meeting will also include a demonstration of the tachistoscope and discussions on how the primary teacher may teach reading and the teaching of science vocabulary and comprehension in the secondary school.

The Gerald A. Yoakam Council, Pittsburgh, was host to the members of ICIRI at their Annual Assembly Meeting held in Pittsburgh, May 7. Dr. Margaret A. Robinson, international president, presided at the open meeting held before the business session. The theme was "Controversial Issues in Reading." Dr. William S. Gray discussed "Development of Word Perception Skills", Dr. A. J. Harris, "Basic Reading Instruction Beyond the Primary Grades"; and Dr. G. A. Yoakam, the "Development of Reading Skills in Curriculum Areas."

LOCAL COUNCILS

Albany City Area Council	Lancaster Council, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Appalachian Council, Boone, North Carolina	Leon County Council, Florida
Arizona Council, Tempe, Arizona	Long Island Council, New York
Berks County Council, Reading, Pennsylvania	Magnolia Council, Mississippi
Bronx Council, Bronx, New York	Manhattan Council, New York
Brooklyn Council, Brooklyn, New York	Mesa Reading Council, Arizona
Cabell Council, Huntington, W. Va.	Milwaukee Area Council, Wisconsin
Calhoun County Council, South Carolina	Mohawk Valley Council No. 3, New York
Capital Reading Council No. 5, Washington, D. C.	Niagara Council No. 2, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada
Central New Jersey Council	North Jersey Council, New Jersey
Chicago Area Council, Chicago, Illinois	North Texas Area Reading Council
Illinois State Normal University Council	Oklahoma Council, Midwest, Oklahoma
Columbus Reading Council, Ohio	Orange Belt, California
Dade County Council, Florida	Orangeburg Council, South Carolina
Dallas Council, Texas	Ottawa, Ontario Council, Canada
East Central Indiana Council	Painesville City Reading Council, Ohio
El Dorado Council No. 1, Arkansas	Queen Anne's Council, Maryland
El Dorado Council No. 2, Arkansas	Queensborough Council, New York
Fruitland Council, Washington	San Gabriel Council, California
Hamilton County Council, Chattanooga, Tennessee	Sioux City Council, Iowa
Indiana State Teachers College Council, Indiana, Pennsylvania	South Carolina Reading Council
Iowa State Teachers College Council, Cedar Falls, Iowa	South Eastern State College Council, Oklahoma
Kanawha Council, West Virginia	Spokane Council, Washington
Kennewick Schools Council, Washington	Staten Island Council, New York
Kent State University Council, Kent, Ohio	Suffolk Council, New York
Kern County Local Council, Bakersfield, California	Texas Southern Council, Texas
Kingston Council No. 4, Kingston, Ontario, Canada	Toronto Council No. 1, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Kingwood Council, West Virginia	Welland-Port Colborne and District Council, Welland, Ontario, Canada
	Westchester Reading Council, New York
	Western Michigan College Council, Michigan
	West Suburban Council
	Gerald A. Yoakam Council, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Names and addresses of the presidents of the LOCAL COUNCILS may be secured by writing to Dr. Donald L. Cleland, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania.

from **McGRAW-HILL**

*An invaluable aid in solving
reading problems in your school . . .*

PROBLEMS IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF READING

by RUTH STRANG, Teachers College, Columbia University
CONSTANCE M. McCULLOUGH, San Francisco State College
ARTHUR E. TRAXLER, Educational Records Bureau, New York

McGRAW-HILL SERIES IN EDUCATION **NEW SECOND EDITION**
438 pages, \$5.00

This revision presents the whole school and college reading program in which every member of the staff participates. To that end it discusses reading programs in different kinds of situations and describes concretely the contributions of subject teachers, administrators, counselors, librarians, and special teachers of reading and reading counselors. For each of these individuals, the book formulates the diagnostic procedures he may use, the instruction materials suited to students of different reading levels and difficulties, and the possible remedial and developmental procedures appropriate to the students.

A distinctive new text of unusual interest . . .

BASAL READING INSTRUCTION

by GERALD A. YOAKAM, University of Pittsburgh

McGRAW-HILL SERIES IN EDUCATION **357 pages, \$4.50**

In this fine new text a well-known expert in the field provides a clear picture of the current stage of the teaching of reading. It is well written and logically and effectively organized. The book is in line with present-day trends, particularly in its emphasis on the developmental character of reading as a part of the child's growth. The book presents a complete and comprehensive treatment of teaching children the basic reading skills. It provides all the material needed to teach a course on methods of teaching reading to present or prospective teachers.

Each of the basal factors involved in reading sequentially, level by level, through the elementary school are treated in emphasizing the developmental character of the process of learning to read. This new work is an outstanding contribution toward improving reading instruction in the schools of America.

SEND FOR COPIES ON APPROVAL _____

McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

330 West 42nd Street New York 36, N. Y.

PRINT II